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Phone sex wars heat up

Despite Jesse Helms' hang-ups, fans of phone sex may be off the hook

By Jennie McKnight

ALBANY, N.Y. — Advocates and owners of phone sex lines won a victory here March 7, when state regulators temporarily rejected a New York Telephone plan that many said would wipe out the booming phone sex industry in the state. The action by the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) is a boost for opponents of a Jesse Helms-sponsored federal law aimed at severely restricting phone sex lines that is scheduled to go into effect March 21.

Helms, the North Carolina Republican, authored "Dial-a-porn" legislation that was passed overwhelmingly by the U.S. Senate as part of an appropriations bill in November of 1989. The legislation, which is a revised version of a 1987 ban on phone sex lines that was later ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, prohibits "obscene" or "indecent" telephone communication for "commercial purposes" that is accessible to a person under 18. The law requires telephone companies to block access to sex lines unless customers submit a written request saying they want access to the lines.

New York Telephone submitted a request to the PSC in February that, if approved, would have taken effect on the day the new federal restrictions apply. The phone company asked for two things: 1) the introduction of a subscription (written request) system for all 970- lines, which are the pre-recorded "adult" phone sex lines operated within New York, and some 550- (chat) lines, and 2) the ability to stop providing billing and collection services for the vendors of commercial phone lines the company deemed bad for its "image."

The latter request, having no relationship to the new federal law, might have also affected other phone sex lines like the 900-pre-recorded message lines that are interstate lines operated by long distance carriers. Because the costs of providing their own billing would have been enormous for each phone line owner, the request was seen by phone sex advocates as an attempt by NYTel to run the lines out of business.

When the proposed regulations (called tariffs in the phone business) were made public in New York, phone sex line owners and advocates — especially the gay ones — mounted an intense and outraged response. *Outweek* magazine, a gay and lesbian weekly that was started last year by phone sex entrepreneur Kendall Morrison, ran a cover asking: "Does the end of phone sex mean the end of the gay press?" The same issue's editorial announced that once the Helms law takes effect, "the incidence of unsafe sex will skyrocket," and "the incidence of AIDS will skyrocket."

Morrison issued a "call to arms" to *Outweek* readers, asking for loud and public opposition to the Helms legislation. An organization called SAFE CALL was put together — composed of "gay and AIDS activists, civil liberties groups and adult phone line owners" — to protest NYTel's proposal. SAFE CALL took out a full-page color ad in New York's *Village Voice* warning of the impending threats to free speech, safe sex and commerce. Before its hearing on March 7, the PSC got a barrage of letters, faxes and phone calls protesting the restrictive regulations.

While it is possible to construe NYTel's request to begin subscriber services for the 550- and 970- lines as an attempt to conform to the soon-to-be enacted Helms law, the PSC thought the company went further than necessary in its efforts to restrict the lines. Edward Collins, a spokesperson for the PSC, told *GCN* that the Commission rejected NYTel's request to instigate a subscriber system based on the company's opinion of whether the content of the communication was obscene or indecent.

Instead, the PSC suggested that the owners of the phone lines themselves should determine whether the messages on their lines are indecent, and then inform the company if they describe themselves that way. "New York Telephone will not be allowed to review content and make determinations with regard to whether the content is indecent," said Collins.

Asked whether he thought any of the gay sex lines would tell NYTel that they operated "indecent" lines, Gabriel Rotello, *Outweek's* editor, said "No, nobody's going to voluntarily cooperate with these oppressive, right-wing idiots."

In addition to rejecting NYTel's effort to determine which phone lines are indecent, the PSC also refused to approve the company's request to stop billing for lines that it claimed hurt its image. Collins said that the company must provide billing and collection for the customers it serves now. Lawyers involved in the controversy said the company's rationale for stopping billing based on its perception of its own public image was especially weak from a legal standpoint.

Evan Wolfson, staff attorney at Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, said NYTel's status as a monopoly and the availability of free blocking services for anyone who requests it strengthened the arguments against the company. "Surely the professed 'image' concerns and 'business policy' do not outweigh New Yorkers' rights to free speech . . .," said Wolfson in a letter to PSC Secretary John Kelliher.

The NYTel proposal is not technically dead, according to Collins. The PSC "suspended" it, which means NYTel can request to have it reconsidered, which would then involve public hearings and another ruling. At this point, NYTel could come back with a revised proposal before the March 21 enactment of the federal law, or it could do nothing, according to Collins.

Having emerged relatively unscathed from the current battle with NYTel, phone sex line owners in New York and elsewhere are turning to the federal level, since U.S. authorities presumably could attempt to prosecute them after March 21. The phone sex line owners, who call themselves "information providers," were planning to file a federal lawsuit as *GCN* went to press. The suit will be filed on behalf of all phone sex line owners, not just gay ones. A similar suit is expected to be filed by the users of the lines, who argue that their rights to free speech and free association are among those trampled by Helms' most recent legislative coup.

Although Helms wrote the new law in an

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Celebrating International Women's Day

Senate defeats anti-gay Armstrong amendment

Swift action by gay and lesbian rights advocates barely nixes effort to exempt youth organizations from anti-discrimination law

By John Zeh

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Senate narrowly rejected a surprise attempt by Sen. William Armstrong (R-Colo.) to exempt Big Brothers and other youth-service entities from legislation barring anti-gay discrimination in the District of Columbia, March 1.

Despite the slim 50-47 margin, activists cheered the vote as the second significant victory within three weeks for progressive lobbyists and leaders in the Senate. On Feb. 8, activists were also forced to mobilize quickly and also managed to counter Sen. Jesse Helms' attack on the Hate Crimes Statistics Act, which was overwhelmingly passed by the Senate, 92-4. (See *GCN*, Feb. 11.)

The debate was over the National Community Service Act, which was co-sponsored by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) During a fiery session on the Senate floor, Armstrong pushed for an amendment that would have allowed organizations to bar gay people from serving as "role models, coaches, counselors, or friends of minors, and prevent a present, real abuse." Said Armstrong, "It's really a straight up-or-down issue on whether you think groups ought to be forced to admit homosexual persons," he continued. "By long-standing tradition, practically as far back as history records, (gay people) have been regarded as out of the mainstream as persons whose behavior is disruptive and unsuitable as role models for impressionable young people. For the D.C. government to require [groups] to admit these people is intolerable," concluded Armstrong.

Steve Smith, legislative director of the Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF), warned that the scope of the amendment was so sweeping that it could have required D.C. to let schools fire or refuse to hire gay and lesbian teachers.

Armstrong, who insisted he is not a

"basher," said he and seven co-sponsors felt compelled to act because of D.C.'s "odious and corrupt" human rights code that allows "deviant behavior" around children. (Staff members from both Armstrong's office and Big Brothers said that Armstrong had not consulted the group.) Twice before, Armstrong has passed amendments exempting religious organizations, like Georgetown University, from the code. The first amendment was struck down and the school settled without appealing to the Supreme Court. A suit to strike the second exemption is imminent.

Late in the afternoon of Feb. 28, a reporter from Armstrong's state, Colorado, called the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) with a tip that Armstrong was going to block the legislation. While Kennedy negotiated language "to accommodate Armstrong," Peri Jude Radecic, NGLTF's legislative director, contacted Dick Clark, lobbyist for the Human Rights Campaign Fund, Chai Feldblum of the American Civil Liberties Union and others.

The final version of the amendment submitted by Kennedy allowed organizations to deny, abridge, restrict or condition participation of "any adult homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual" who "has been convicted of or is charged with a sexual offense with a minor, or who otherwise poses a threat" of having sex with, or sexually abusing, a minor. And it allows the parent, guardian or young person involved to alter the relationship if one of them objects to the volunteer's sexual orientation.

A livid Kennedy attacked Armstrong's "gross misrepresentation," saying, "We know what's behind these various kinds of murmurs and actions — stereotyping. Those children and those parents ought to be protected whether the potential abuser is homo-

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Quote of the week

“The darkest days of the AIDS crisis still lie ahead of us.”

— Elizabeth Taylor, celebrated movie queen and founding chair of the American Foundation for AIDS Research, in the New York Times. Taylor was in Washington, D.C., last week lobbying for a bill that would provide \$500 million in emergency funds to care for people with AIDS. The bill, which was co-authored by the unlikely duo of Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), says that the AIDS epidemic should be treated as a natural disaster, like a flood or fire, and that emergency money should be made available immediately. The strategy of classifying AIDS as a natural disaster was inspired by the swift action the U.S. government took following the Oct. 17 earthquake in and around San Francisco. The quake killed 67 people and Congress sent more than \$3 billion in aid. To date, 5,000 San Franciscans have died of AIDS.

Father Ritter resigns from Covenant House

NEW YORK — Under fire since allegations of sexual misconduct surfaced last December, the Rev. Bruce Ritter resigned his post as head of Covenant House Feb. 27. Frank Macchiarola, who has served as interim director since Ritter was ordered to take a leave of absence three weeks ago, also stepped down, according to the *New York Times*.

In 1968, Ritter founded what has become the country’s largest shelter for runaway and homeless teenagers, Covenant House, in two deserted East Village apartments. Last year, Covenant House had a budget of over \$87 million, and Ritter had earned the praise of such figures as former Mayor Ed Koch and John Cardinal O’Connor. In fact, Koch and O’Connor were two of the people who rushed to Ritter’s defense when the scandal broke. (See *GCN*, Feb. 18.) Kevin Kite was the first person to charge Ritter with sexual misconduct, and two former Covenant House residents levelled similar charges shortly thereafter. Ritter was asked by his Franciscan superiors to take a leave of absence Feb. 6.

In addition to allegations of sexual misconduct, Ritter had also been charged with possible misuse of Covenant House funds. The day after Ritter resigned, Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau announced that no criminal charges would be brought against Ritter. Morgenthau denied that there was any direct connection between his announcement and Ritter’s resignation.

Meanwhile, interim director Macchiarola said he was forced out by Ritter and the Covenant House board. James J. Harnett, Ritter’s longtime chief aide, was appointed acting president by the board, which is beginning a search for a Roman Catholic priest to replace Ritter.

A church official said that the Franciscans will continue an investigation of the charges against Ritter.

□ Kelly Gaines

Gray will co-sponsor federal legislation to protect gay men and lesbians

PHILADELPHIA — House Majority Whip William Gray (D-Penn.) has agreed to become the 75th co-sponsor of the Civil Rights Amendment Act of 1989, according to Rita Addessa, executive director of the Philadelphia Lesbian and Gay Task Force (PLGTF). The measure, which would amend the 1964 Civil Rights Act to prohibit discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations on the basis of sexual orientation, was originally introduced in Congress in 1973 by Rep. Bella Abzug.

Gray’s announcement was made during what Addessa called “a highly successful, dynamite” meeting with staff members from the PLGTF and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. “There has been some ambiguity about the Congressman’s public support for the federal civil rights bill,” said Addessa. “His support is now clear.”

□ Kelly Gaines

In addition to meeting with Gray, lobbyists also spoke with Sen. John Heinz (R-Pa.). According to Addessa, although Heinz said, “If there were a gay rights bill before me today, I would vote for it,” he would not agree to co-sponsor the bill. Heinz, who strongly supported the Hate Crimes Statistics Act recently passed by the Senate (see *GCN*, Feb. 11), said he would have to examine the Civil Rights Amendment Act more closely before agreeing to become a co-sponsor.

Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.) maintained his refusal to meet with lesbian and gay groups.

The bill faces an uphill battle in the House, where it is now under consideration by subcommittees of the Judiciary and Education and Labor Committees. The bill in the Senate has eight sponsors and is currently before that body’s Judiciary Committee. Following the meetings with Gray and Heinz, Addessa told *GCN*, “I expect hearings to be held within the next year and I’d like to see passage by 1994.”

□ Marc Stein

Hoosier pride set

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — The first major gay and lesbian rally in this midwestern state will take place June 16, according to organizers of the event. The announcement of the rally — which will coincide with pride celebrations nationwide — came after months of debate about what kind of pride event to hold.

Some members of the Indiana gay community pushed for a more dramatic event, like a march, but others thought the conservative political climate in Indiana would keep many from participating. “Most Hoosiers don’t want to stick out their necks for something as public and risky as a march unless it’s a particular, very pressing issue,” Ruth Peters, Pride Week coordinator, told *Heartland*, a new gay newspaper aimed at midwestern readers.

The Indianapolis rally will include speakers and performances, and will take place inside the city’s Circle Monument.

□ Jennie McKnight

Lesbian conference seeks dykes with disabilities

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The third national planning meeting for the National Lesbian Conference will take place here, April 27-29. The gathering will also feature the first meeting of the steering committee, which will oversee plans for the conference scheduled to take place in Atlanta in the spring of 1991.

When plans for the steering committee were finalized at the second meeting in Portland Oregon, last July, representation topped the list of priorities. (See *GCN*, Sept. 3, 1989, and Oct. 22, 1989.) Fifty percent of the committee is to be comprised of lesbians of color and lesbians with disabilities will make up 20 percent of the decision-making body.

Some lesbians with disabilities who have been involved in the planning process are concerned that other dykes with disabilities are not aware that some spaces on the committee are reserved. Mary Frances Platt and Barb Bechdol, who represented the lesbians with disabilities caucus on the interim steering committee, are trying to get the word out and encourage lesbians with disabilities to become involved in the planning process. Platt and Bechdol suggest that there are two ways to get involved: contacting regional representatives and coming to the Kansas City meeting. In an open letter, Platt and Bechdol promise that “If we get to Kansas City and find that the regions have not fulfilled the criteria, a strong presence of “unelected” disabled lesbians will ensure that that 20 percent commitment is carried out.”

To find out how to contact regional organizers, call the conference’s national office at (518) 463-1051. For information about money available to women who want to go to the April meeting, contact Stephanie Joe Kent, P.O. Box 8389, Albuquerque, New Mexico, (505) 842-0727. For information about the Deaf Lesbians Caucus, contact Julie Nelson, 1651 Lamont St., N.W., Apt. L-1, Washington, D.C., 20010, (202) 328-7547 (tty only). For general information about the conference, contact Mary Frances Platt, 16 Center St., Suite 218, Northampton, Mass., (413) 323-5082.

□ Kelly Gaines

International Women’s Day Notes



Kendall Lovett

Rain can’t dampen Sydney fete

SYDNEY, Australia — Despite a continuous downpour, Sydney’s thirteenth Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade was held as planned, Feb. 17. In choosing not to cancel the event, organizers seemingly made the right decision as thousands of people sporting umbrellas lined the route on either side, watching and applauding as the parade passed by.

Led by Dykes on Bikes, this year’s parade featured brilliantly colorful and elaborate floats. (The gay and lesbian Mardi Gras workshop, where most of the floats were constructed, should be congratulated on its choice of materials as the decorations stood up to the elements without noticeable deterioration.) A large group of people representing the AIDS Council of New South Wales wore flashy silver and white costumes and carried tall silver and white umbrellas, while the Gay and Lesbian Immigration Task Force’s float boasted a revolving globe of the world.

In a first-time effort, this year’s parade was available to a huge listening audience via simultaneous broadcasts by gay and lesbian radio stations. People in Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide, Canberra, Brisbane and Newcastle joined the celebration, which organizers said was highly successful.

□ Kendall Lovett

Yugoslavian dykes get together

Yugoslavia — Lesbian feminists who met through a straight feminist organization have formed their own group, according to London’s *Gay Times*. The group plans to function as a social network and study/discussion group with hopes of taking on cultural projects in the future. To contact the group, write: Lila Inicijativa, Zenska grupa Tresnjeska, R Koncara 98, 41000 Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

In the city of Ljubljana, lesbians have produced the second issue of the Slovenian language lesbian magazine *Lesbozine*. The issue is reported to cover news of anti-lesbian and gay persecution in Romania. The magazine is available from Lesbiska Sekcija, Kersnikova 4, YU-6100, Ljubljana, Yugoslavia.

□ Jennie McKnight

Religious censors in Argentina

Argentina — Two popular singers had their television contract cancelled after they appeared on a live talk show and revealed a picture of themselves kissing. According to the gay newspaper *Heartland*, the lovers, Sandra Mianovitch and Celeste Carvalho, got the boot after a Catholic organization, Familia Christiana, pressured the television network.

□ Jennie McKnight

Legal aid for poor women

KAMPALA, Uganda — Women lawyers here have started a clinic for poor women to help them with legal problems. According to *Off Our Backs*, the Women’s Legal Aid Clinic, which began in 1988, is comprised of members of the Ugandan Association of Women Lawyers who volunteer their time while holding down paying jobs with the government or private law firms.

The most common problems facing women here deal with family law. For instance, some women may falsely believe that they are legally married — an assumption that could have serious economic ramifications. “The women do not realize they are not protected even though they produced children,” said lawyer Hope Mwesigye. She said that women are not entitled to anything when their partners die “unless it is a marriage — in a church, registry or common law — recognized by the state.”

The lawyers try to get men and women to come to educational sessions together so that they will understand what happens when a man dies without leaving a will. For instance, sometimes a man’s family will drive the woman out of her own house in an attempt to acquire all of the man’s possessions. (Even under such circumstances, some legal aid lawyers are able to obtain compensation for women by getting settlements for their children because Ugandan law requires that children receive a large part of their father’s estate following his death.)

In another scenario involving family law problems, men sometimes turn their wives out of the house because they want to marry another woman. Legal clinic lawyers point out, however, that even in such cases, women here are afraid to get a divorce because of the stigma that is attached to divorce. “If you’re divorced from the home, you are looked upon as a failure,” said legal aid lawyer Yeri Wakabi. “If you were looking for a job they would reject you — they would say if you can’t manage your house, how can you manage public affairs.”

In addition to holding educational sessions here in the capital city, lawyers from the Women’s Legal Aid Clinic also travel to rural areas in efforts acquaint women with the law.

□ Kelly Gaines

Lesbians on the loose

SYDNEY, Australia — A new publication for lesbians recently made its debut here. *Philadelphia Gay News* reports that *Lesbians on the Loose* will fill a gap in providing information to local dykes. “Ever since we can remember, Sydney lesbians have not had a regular source of information about what activities are available,” said Frances Rand and Jackie Scherer, who publish the new magazine. “There’s been the gay press, but it’s either been dominated by the boys or come out too infrequently. Sydney lesbians need a publication that can be more accessible to dykes.”

□ Kelly Gaines

Icelandic straight rag works to include gay people

REYKJAVIK, Iceland — Lesbians and gay men said they were happy that a new mainstream magazine here is making a concerted effort to include gay people in its coverage, according to the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA). *Bleikt & Blatt* (“*Pink and Blue*”) “very much want[s] to give lesbians and gays a role in the discussion of sexual identity,” said editor Jona Ingiborg Jonsdottir who is also Iceland’s only university-educated sexologist. “Our first issue includes interviews with homosexuals and articles about homosexuality,” she said. Jonsdottir said that the first issue sold out in record time.

“We are very pleased with the work done by Jona,” said Lana Kolbrun, chair of Samtokin, the Icelandic lesbian and gay organization. “She has been writing in many newspaper columns about sexuality for a long time and has always given a very positive picture of lesbians and gays,” she said. Kolbrun stressed the significance of the inclusion of gay perspectives in a mainstream magazine, saying “we have practically no voice in a society which is very silent about homosexuality.”

For her part, *Bleikt & Blatt*’s editor said that she is interested in finding more gay and lesbian material to include in her publication. “I hope to be able to attend the next ILGA world conference in Stockholm to meet activists, journalists and researchers discussing the questions of human sexuality,” said Jonsdottir.

□ Kelly Gaines

Fighting the repeal effort

Boston activists split over anti-referendum campaign strategies

By Laura Briggs

BOSTON — Organizing a campaign to oppose the anticipated referendum to defeat the Massachusetts gay rights bill, gay rights advocates held meetings on two successive Saturdays, Feb. 24 and March 3. The meetings yielded a rough organizational structure for a coalition to fight for the law, but some activists — primarily progressives and people of color — have raised concerns about being excluded from the process.

Attorney General James Shannon ruled Dec. 7 that the proposed referendum invalidating the gay rights bill was unconstitutional because the new civil rights law contains an amendment exempting religious groups (see *GCN*, Dec. 10, 1989). That decision was challenged by a rightwing coalition that had supported the referendum. A decision from the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) on the constitutionality of the referendum is expected in June at the earliest, according to Kevin Cathcart of Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD), the public interest law group that will argue against holding the referendum.

The gay rights bill officially became law Jan. 15 and is in effect unless a repeal effort is successful.

A contentious first meeting

In the midst of a snowstorm on Feb. 24, about 150 people attended the initial meeting to plan the anti-referendum strategy. Boston City Councilor David Scondras said he was impressed by the turnout. "This means there's a lot of energy out there to fight the repeal, and I think there's a desire on everyone's part to work together," he said.

Scondras' optimistic assessment notwithstanding, the long meeting was occasionally contentious as community members discussed process and organizational issues. After much discussion, the activists moved to create a small steering committee and a larger advisory committee. Some participants, particularly members of the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights, argued that the steering committee should be open to any group that wanted to join.

"I think it was disappointing people weren't willing to adopt a more open and inclusionary structure," said the Coalition's David LaFontaine. "Many groups and individuals left that meeting feeling that they had been shut out of the decision-making process."

A compromise proposal was accepted that established a small steering committee and a larger advisory group with the power to overrule the steering committee. The group compiled an initial list of 46 organizations, comprising most of the lesbian and gay groups and supporters in Massachusetts, as members of the advisory group.

"There has to be a steering committee to take leadership, and it has to be small so it can work effectively," said Don Gorton of Greater Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance.

Organizations which were candidates for the steering committee were voted on by the meeting. The six organizations that received the most positive votes were seated on the steering committee.

They were: Springfield's Alliance for Equality, the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights, the Greater Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance, the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Worcester County Lesbian and Gay Alliance. Each organization will be allowed to send two representatives.

Organizations not receiving enough votes to be included on the steering committee were: Cape and Islands Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Issues and Concerns, Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, Gay and Lesbian Campaign Committee, Gay and Lesbian Democrats, Gay and Lesbian Labor Activists Network, and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF). In addition, Citizens for Participation in Political Action (CPPAX), Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, and the New Alliance Party did not receive enough qualifying votes.

The decision to elect steering committee members happened late in the meeting, after more than half of those present at the beginning had left, and took some by surprise.

However, the process allowed for at least six additional seats to remain open.

Two issues raised during the initial meeting remain unresolved. The Springfield group proposed a name for the campaign organization: Family Alliance for Individual Rights (FAIR). The proposal prompted fears that the campaign would not be an "out" gay and lesbian campaign if the name did not include the words "gay and lesbian."

"I'm concerned that there may be some sentiment to run a quiet campaign," said Jeff Nickle, of the Boston University Lesbian/Gay Alliance. "I think in order to win, we must not be tunnel-visioned and do whatever it takes to win, because a real victory in this campaign will be if as many gay, lesbian, and bisexual people in Massachusetts feel this is their fight," he said.

The Coalition proposal also suggested a structure in which "working groups" would be responsible for different areas of work. This proposal also remains to be resolved at a future meeting.

Beyond the decision-making questions made at the meeting, some activists questioned the process, maintaining that the meeting excluded groups interested in working on a referendum. They argued that the meeting was not equally publicized in all parts of the lesbian and gay community. In particular, several people noted that groups on the left in the gay and lesbian community, organizations of people of color, and working class people were not represented at the initial meeting.

"Who gets contacted about meetings has the effect of shaping the organization that comes out of the meeting," said Ann Holder, a local lesbian activist. "It seemed like a lot of progressive people heard about the meeting through the grapevine, in contrast to others, who got letters. Ironically, the people who didn't get contacted were the very people who have a lot of experience with grassroots campaigns. And I think that really shows, in the creation of an organizational structure that is so bureaucratic and unwieldy," she said.

The second meeting

Much of the March 3 meeting was spent reviewing what took place at the Feb. 24 meeting. While it was originally scheduled as a steering committee meeting, the event was attended by many people who had not been present at the previous meeting. Debate centered on the legitimacy of the steering committee and the process that was used to set it up.

The Alliance's Don Gorton, who chaired the first three hours of the seven-hour meeting, told participants that the meeting would be run by Robert's Rules of Order, and motions would only be accepted from members of the steering committee. After the meeting, Gorton told *GCN*, "I was expecting something like the Alliance steering committee meetings, where a few members sometimes attend as an audience. I was unclear about the procedure — the Alliance uses Robert's Rules, so I just decided to use them in that meeting."

The decision drew criticism from some meeting participants. "Robert's Rules aren't empowering to some people," said Ann Holder, "people who aren't familiar with them, people who [steering committee members] would want to work with."

Susan Moir of the Gay and Lesbian Labor Activists Network said her group was not contacted about the Feb. 24 meeting, even though GALLAN had named campaigning among union members in the event of a referendum as one of two items on its 1990 political agenda. "It's obviously not a cross-class alliance," she said. Moir said that she believed that politically progressive people were not included in the meeting, and that the liberals felt that they should control the campaign. "We need to recognize that we have two wings and we need to build alliances. There's going to be a campaign of homophobia against us as a people," she said.

The Boston chapter of the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays (NCBLG) was represented by Angela Bowen at the second meeting, who said her group was not interested in being on the steering committee

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Angry artists protest censorship

LOS ANGELES — About 150 anti-censorship activists demonstrated at the L.A. County Art Museum, March 1, to protest policies restricting the use of federal funds for arts projects. Co-sponsored by the Coalition for Freedom of Expression and ACT UP/L.A., the event came just four days before a Congressional committee looking into arts funding began holding hearings here.

Protesters held up large cut-out signs featuring the likeness of gay artists, such as Robert Mapplethorpe, whose exhibit triggered censorship debate and subsequent legislation last year. The demonstrators targeted the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), which is responsible for distributing federal funds for arts projects. Since Congress passed legislation restricting the use of those funds last October, the NEA has been under fire from all sides.

Demonstrators risking arrest wore black and white jumpsuits, while others chanted and picketed. Protester Tom Dougherty told *GCN* that the group marched from the museum to the Federal Building in downtown L.A., where 28 people were arrested and charged with blocking the doors to a federal building. Dougherty, who was one of those arrested, said that he found the experience "very empowering." He added that many, if not most, of the arrestees were artists.

□ Kelly Gaines

Hate crimes rise on both coasts

By Laura Briggs

BOSTON — Reports of hate crimes against gay men and lesbians jumped dramatically in Massachusetts in 1989, according to statistics released Feb. 15 by the Fenway Community Health Center Victim Recovery Program here.

According to Fenway, 84 incidents of anti-gay violence against 128 people and three organizations were reported. This year's figures constitute a 206% increase in reported hate-motivated attacks, compared with 1988, when 62 people reported being victimized by anti-gay violence.

Fenway cited the increased visibility of its Victim Recovery Program as one factor in the rise of reports of violence.

In addition to the 84 reported anti-gay incidents, Fenway documented 41 attacks on lesbians and gay men that could not be definitively characterized as hate-motivated, but which took place near lesbian or gay establishments. The series of attacks — including eight brutal robberies and one homicide — that occurred in or near the Fens, a well-known cruising area, was included in the count.

"The rise in the number of attacks against lesbians and gay men reported to our program is frightening," said Joyce Collier, Fenway's Victim Recovery coordinator, "but it is encouraging to see so many people coming forward to report attacks against them and to use the criminal justice system to fight back." Collier said that many lesbians and gay men do not report anti-gay violence or harassment for fear of further victimization or discrimination by police, and that these numbers were certainly an underestimate of the total.

Physical assaults took place in 42 of anti-gay incidents, with 14 of those resulting in serious injuries requiring medical attention. Thirty-six of the incidents included verbal threats and harassment, and reports from lesbian and gay organizations that were victims of vandalism or anti-gay graffiti bring the number to 84. Four of the people who were victimized by anti-gay violence were not in fact lesbian or gay, but were attacked because they were assumed to be.

In San Francisco, the Community United Against Violence (CUAV) released numbers

in late January showing that nearly four times as many lesbians were victimized by hate incidents in 1989 than in 1988. CUAV documented a 67% increase in overall violence against gay men and lesbians, according to the *Sentinel*, a gay newspaper. There were 331 incidents reported in 1989, compared to 198 in 1988.

Of the more than 300 people who were attacked, 76 required medical treatment, and ten were hospitalized. Hate-motivated vandalism against organizations accounted for another 23 percent, while the remaining 16 percent of incidents involved verbal threats or harassment.

Weapons were involved in 54% of the incidents. Clubs were used in 29, and another 29 involved multiple weapons. Ten reported gay-bashers wielded bottles, and guns, bottles, or vehicles were used in other attacks.

The largest number of the attacks took place in the heavily gay Castro district, where 27 percent of the incidents occurred. Western and Southern San Francisco accounted for 26 percent each, with the remainder taking place outside the city. □

"Community Voices" and "Speaking Out" are parts of our efforts to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings and comments to us, and to respond to ideas expressed in this space. We welcome all contributions except personal attacks. Copies of letters and "Speaking Out" contributions sent elsewhere are printed on a space-available basis. GCN reserves the right to edit letters and "Speaking Out" contributions for length and clarity, in consultation with the author. The opinions expressed are those of the author and are not intended to represent the views of the GCN membership.

Letter and "Speaking Out" contributions must be TYPED and DOUBLE-SPACED. Letters can be NO LONGER THAN TWO PAGES. "Speaking Out" contributions can be NO LONGER THAN FOUR PAGES. Send to: Community Voices or Speaking Out, GCN, 62 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116.

Visibility? Whose visibility?

Dear GCN:

We must respond to the accusations presented by Micki Siegel concerning the Northampton Lesbian/Gay Pride March (See GCN Feb. 18-24, 1990). Her letter is an inaccurate and self-serving description of crucial events. Your readers deserve to hear both sides of the story.

We were among the six lesbians who came to the first meeting of the Steering Committee. We did so because we were concerned about the focus the march has been taking in past years. Last year, in addition to the inclusion of "Bisexual" in the march title (thereby diverting a political issue into a sexual one), there was no lesbian representation among the speakers at the rally. Nor were any lesbian (or women's) issues addressed. This despite the fact that the great majority of participants in the march are lesbian. We were determined not to let this happen again. We attended the meeting in order to express our concerns, explain our position, and volunteer to work on the march.

What we encountered was hostility and nastiness on a level for which we were completely unprepared. When we tried to explain that we felt that lesbian and gay issues were not identical to bisexual issues, because bisexuals continue to enjoy heterosexual privilege, we were told we could "pass" if we dressed differently. Mrs. Siegal announced that she could speak for the lesbian community "because I have always felt like a man in a woman's body." And so on. The horror continued.

At the initial meeting, the group present voted to allow the title of the march to return to the original "Lesbian/Gay Pride" — a tradition of seven years. Those voting in favor included one bisexual woman and one gay man. Immediately upon hearing the outcome of the vote, some of those who had been opposed claimed they "hadn't understood the vote was binding." We agreed to vote again at a later meeting — one month later. Yes, a large number of us attended the next meeting. Because a large number of us were alarmed and concerned. We postponed discussion of the new make-up of the Steering Committee until the following meeting. It was decided that the Steering Committee should be comprised of gay men and lesbians, for we realize that we must speak for ourselves and determine our own agenda. Mrs. Siegel was not present at that meeting. Never was Mrs. Siegel — or any other bisexual — told she could not serve on the publicity committee.

In the following days, "the wonderful Jean and Jim Genasci from PFLAG" took it upon themselves to write to at least 13 local groups informing them of how "naughty" those nasty lesbians had been. At no time did the wonderful Genascis speak to any lesbian who had been present at the meetings, or show any interest in hearing the other perspective on what had happened.

Yes, this year the Steering Committee for the march consists of lesbians. No gay men expressed an interest in being on the committee. Lesbians do not "claim to speak for the community" as Mrs. Siegel claims. (But Mrs. Siegel does not speak for "the community," either.) There is a difference of opinion here as to who makes up "the community." For reasons we cannot comprehend, some bisexual women seem to feel

they cannot create their own community, but must attach themselves to the lesbian community. For many of us, our lesbianism is a way of life, not just something we do in bed. If Mrs. Siegel and her ilk are so concerned with having their sexual minority status respected, why don't they march in the Lesbian/Gay Pride March as supporters, under their own banner?

We, too, are concerned with the "unity of our community." We are also concerned with integrity, and with our own identity.

Sincerely,
Sarah Dreher
Lis Brook
Amherst, Mass.

Talking about class

Dear GCN:

I extend my thanks and applause to the *Gay Community News* collective for producing "Call it Class," a three part series on class in lesbian and gay communities. Hopefully the series will be reprinted separately at a later date for it should have a broad appeal to our straight friends interested in addressing class issues.

The only thing I felt was missing from the series (maybe I missed it too) was a sort of suburban middle class perspective. This is my story, a split level suburban home, June Cleaver-like mother, and corporate environment. I think many lesbians and gay men struggle from this class position (middle class, college educated without a tradition of family wealth) to find their own place in the world that reconciles the past with the present.

Nevertheless, congratulations. I also liked the art work used in the supplements, particularly the illustrations and photo collage.

Sincerely,
David Anger
Minneapolis, Minn.

Attn: lesbians in prison

Dear GCN:

I am currently working on an article on lesbians in prison and I hope that perhaps some of the lesbian prisoners reading GCN would be interested in helping me out. The article focuses on lesbian sex and sexuality exploring the differences between those who are lesbians before they are incarcerated and those who are sexual with other women due to their situation, relationships in prison, ways of finding a place to have sex, access to lesbian pornography, etc.

Either you can write me and respond to some of these ideas (anecdotes would be great!) or I have a set of questions that I could provide. I would appreciate any contributions — no names will be used, only pseudonyms. Thanks for your help, you can write to me at the following address: Sue Rochman c/o IRC, P.O. Box 713, Ithaca, New York, 14850.

Sincerely,
Sue Rochman
Ithaca, N.Y.

Thanks to Dos Lesbos

Dear GCN:

Recently Fenway Community Health Center's Building Project sponsored a benefit performance of the musical comedy, "Dos Lesbos," to help raise money for the construction of our new health care facility. The play's two performers, Lea DeLaria and Kelley Edwards, were generous to offer us this benefit which was a great success.

We especially want to publicly thank Lea DeLaria who first approached us with this idea and who spent an enormous amount of her time and energy promoting the show and selling tickets for the show as well as raffle tickets at Campus and Moonshine. Her commitment to the success of this event, to our efforts to construct a new facility for the Fenway, and to the ongoing work of the Health Center is an inspiration to us.

It's so wonderful that one of our community's most talented members is also one of the most generous.

Sincerely,
Harry Collings
Cindy Rizzo
Boston, Mass.

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of ten, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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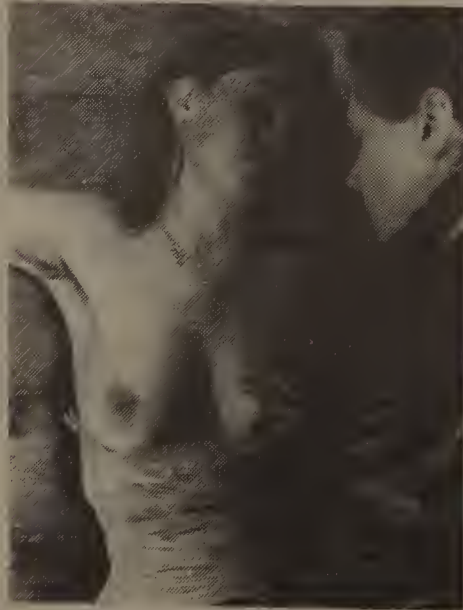
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Sexy, Political & Proud

Gay Community News. Your Guide to the '90s.



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Taking immunities and pleasures for granted

By Joanna Russ

When women-only spaces began in the late 1960s (I was 30 then and saw a lot of it from the beginning), we assumed that the men we were keeping out were straight and that gay men would understand what it meant for an oppressed group to have the autonomy and safety of its own space. That some do and write to the *GCN* to say so is heartening. On the other hand we have Bob Kavin, surely candidate for Meanest Creep of the Decade (See *GCN* Jan. 7-13, 1990). On the third hand, we have Phil Gauthier, whose protest I take to be serious (See *GCN* Feb. 18-24, 1990). I would like to talk to it seriously.

Oppression, rather than a box in which people are stuck, is an account of the forces in people's lives. Some of it is done by obvious and spectacular bigotry like Kavin's really disgusting lawsuit, but most of it is merely the ordinary, everyday, commonplace, thoughtless, "normal" behavior of those who take for granted all sorts of immunities they don't even know they have. Sixties radicals used to say the same thing when they stated, "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem." Yes, men can be carriers of oppression even when they don't wish to be. I have seen too much "decent," totally thoughtless behavior in my life by men who took for granted that they were behaving very well indeed. And I have seen men who are not like this suppress and distort *by their very presence* the consciousness-raising and political work going on among women. Years ago I dropped in on a friend I'd known for years, only to be told by her that she had Black guests and that although they were willing to accept her — she was highly visible as a radical activist — they would leave if any white person they didn't know arrived. I said "O.K." and left myself. What sort of ally and well-wisher would I have been to stand on my "rights" to stay — and fuck up other people's work and lives?

Men do not have to be authoritarian to be authoritative (I'm quoting Christine Delphy). And sexist oppression doesn't happen only in personal relations. Men *are* engineered into oppressor roles against their wills, just as I am engineered into the role of racist oppressor by my very position in the racist system and into a class oppressor by my position in the class system. I didn't choose any of these and I'm not a bigot, nor was I aware when I was growing up that I had immunities and pleasures other people did not — and that I had them *because* others were denied them. And that all I had to do to make sure that situation continued was...nothing. Nothing at all.

Nonetheless it's a serious business to have an easy life *because* so many other people have a hard one. And once I'd rebelled

the fight myself. The administration here does not like some of us, but what the hell, I'm just as crazy as well as smart as the system thinks they are!

Another thing! Never ever take such a good case as that one to the state courts. Take it to the federal courts for a better chance. Please don't be sad. It's not good for you to feel or be that way. And Please don't give up! In order to get what we want so bad, we all have to fight and work our little asses off. Things will have to give! Because it's *WRONG* how the system is doing HIV inmates across the country. We are humans too! It's about time we stood up and fight for our rights, and not each other.

I wonder, do that judge sleep good at night? Thinking about how he did all of you! I wish you all were here with us. There's only 49 of us. Please write. And keep up the good fight!!

Clifford Kendrick
EF-210156 A-unit E-1 cell 53 3
Star Route
Reidsville, GA 30499

against my oppression (which was sexist) I was pushed into examining other people's and to doing *something* about theirs.

I believe Mr. Gauthier when he says that being a gay man is a burden. Not being a "real man" *is* a very bad thing in our culture. I know — after all, I'm not a real man either! And of course gay men are oppressed *as gay*, as I am oppressed because I am a woman and because I am lesbian, and as the brilliant Barbara Smith is oppressed because she is female and lesbian and Black, and as the marvelous poet Chrystos is oppressed because she is female and lesbian and Native American. And so on.

Mr. Gauthier talks about his oppression? Fine! Let him continue to do so. It's quite real. Nor does his sex mean that he has everything he wants and is ecstatically happy. Of course not. It is more than likely that Mr. Gauthier is not a bad man. *But he lives in a bad world in which it's not enough merely to complain that you're not an oppressor because you've never done anything personally nasty to a woman.* I've heard gay men say, "How can I oppress women? I never have anything to do with them." That was just what I felt about people of color when I was fifteen. I don't want Mr. Gauthier (or anyone in his position) to be prostrated by guilt — that is pretty silly — but he is responsible for doing something in a system from which he benefits in some ways even when in other ways it is persecuting him. And one way he can do this is to explore "the shame of not oppressing women sexually and not being a real man" and the pressures on men to be MEN. That would be a service to everyone. The way men are engineered to be oppressors is important to know. I am now exploring how I was engineered to be a racist oppressor. Like, "How can I be oppressing people of color? There aren't any around," and so on. And if it takes a little lightly applied guilt to get the Gauthiers of this world going, O.K. (It certainly helped me.)

Let's hope that eventually the Gauthiers in the gay liberation movement also learn — and spell out — the unpleasant pressures, like being able to keep a job, which keep us oppressors even when we don't want to be.

Does anyone have any projects underway for making Bob Kavin uncomfortable or at least the target of some kind of censure? Does Crone's Harvest need money for the suit? Where can we send it?

[Ed. note: Bob Kavin has initiated the process to file a complaint with the Boston Human Rights Commission. He has not, as of yet, filed a complaint or a lawsuit, so there is no need at this point for money to support Crone's Harvest in a lawsuit.]

Stronger than any prison

Dear *GCN*:

My woman, Karen Morton, wrote you in December about me. She stated about our love and of how she'd be leaving here while I remain.

Since that letter, she's still here but she and I have been separated, me being at one end of the prison while she's at the other. However, our love remains, for it's stronger than any prison.

At one time I didn't believe in real love, as it only brought pain and sorrow. I now see love from a different angle. If anyone sees love as I once did, then you must ask yourself 'Is it love?'. But, please, don't give up, for when that one comes along, even prison walls can't stop it.

Although I hate prison, I'm thankful for coming here, for this is where I found my 'star'.

Mrs. Cindi Morton
Marysville, OH 43040

THE CHOSEN FAMILY



Noreen Stevens

The truth about Chastity Bono

Dear *GCN*:

Why did the *National Enquirer* get there first?

Why has *GCN* missed out on the biggest "is she or isn't she?" news scoop since Madonna and Sandra?

Why are you covering the Gay Civil Rights Bill when you could be showing pictures of Chastity Bono in a form-fitting sequinned gown?

Is it because you are afraid of the truth, afraid you will inadvertently reveal the unaesthetic realities of the Chastity Bono/Liz Smith/Pat Buckley love triangle? How much money did they give you anyways?

Besides, Chastity is the next hottest woman to Jodie Foster.

If she can tell the truth to the *National Enquirer*, why can't she tell the truth to *GCN*?

In solidarity,
Spandexa Exmanfucker
Leatheretta Buick

P.S. When is *GCN* going to get its own TV channel like the *Christian Science Monitor*?

A message from the ladies

Dear *GCN*:

We are here today to remember the millions of unconceived children who die EVERY DAY because of men's uncontrollable LUST. We refuse to stop with just protecting unborn babies, because we know every sperm is a potential president of the United States or IBM, another Jerry Falwell, or even...a Phyllis Schlafly. And yet:

- every day 14 million men in the United States masturbate, and MURDER 50 billion babies by letting these precious sperm be splattered against the bathroom wall, lost in the sheets, and left on the corduroy seats of porn theatres.

- each week millions of young boys are indoctrinated into carrying on this heinous tradition and no one SPEAKS for the SPERM.

- spermicidal foam, which should rightfully be called genocidal foam, is found all across this country in "family drugstores."

Well, we have had ENOUGH. We are here to say:
MASTURBATION IS MURDER.
EVERY SPERM IS SACRED.
PROTECT THE UNCONCEIVED.
PASSPORTS FOR SPERM

We are Ladies Against Women:
Mrs. William Smith.
Mrs. Jonathon Donnell.
Mrs. Robert Welsch.
Mrs. Daniel Jackson,
and many others.

How can you support Silber?

[*GCN* received a copy of this letter to Leonard Zakim, Executive Director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. — Ed.]

Dear Mr. Zakim:

I am sure you will recall the furor that was raised by the Anti-Defamation League's choice of John Silber for its Distinguished Public service award last fall. As a member of the Committee to Fight Bigotry in All Its Forms, I helped coordinate a demonstration protesting this award at Boston University the evening of the ceremonies.

Immediately upon hearing of your intention to bestow this honor, members of the Committee communicated to you our firm conviction that Mr. Silber was an inappropriate recipient with his long history of defamation against gays and lesbians, feminists, unionists, students, racial and ethnic communities, people concerned with stopping the spread of AIDS, and those working toward achieving diplomatic solutions in the alleviation of global conflicts. We shared our concerns at that time because we knew that large segments of the community would be offended and estranged from the Anti-Defamation League if the award was given as planned. You, however, ignored these concerns and refused to meet with representatives of our organization.

Now Mr. Silber has come under fire for his comments on welfare and immigrants, which many interpret as racist, and about the relative dangers of alcohol, which appear misinformed at best. And most recently he has equated Jesse Jackson's oratorical style to that of Adolf Hitler, and defamed Jews by charging that the "racism of Jews is quite phenomenal...If you are goyim considering becoming a Jew, you are going to be second-class in that synagogue." (*Boston Sunday Globe*, February 11, 1990)

As a Jew and a gay man I am dismayed and offended by your remarks in the Tuesday, February 13, 1990 issue of the *Boston Globe* virtually excusing and justifying this man's bigotry when you assert that "he is not anti-Semitic" and his comments do not change "the fact of his friendship toward the Jewish community and Israel."

Your comments concern me because it seems clear that you cannot see what has been apparent to a great many others for a long time: an award to John Silber by the ADL is a discredit not only to other disenfranchised groups, but also to your own constituency. In short, it is an affront to good caring people everywhere who have had enough of Mr. Silber's abuse.

Therefore, in an attempt to salvage any semblance of credibility of the ADL's award granting process, I ask that you make an immediate and public admission of a lapse in judgment in granting the award and a repudiation of Mr. Silber. By taking this stand you would show your willingness to bring the ADL back to its mission of "combating bigotry in all its forms." Anything less would signal complicity with the voice of prejudice.

Sincerely,
Warren Blumenfeld
Boston, MA

Georgia HIV to Alabama HIVs: Keep fighting!

Dear *GCN*:

I'm responding to the situation of the Capshaw, Alabama HIV inmates who are being faced with that so call judges ruling. I'm very sorry that it have to be that way for you all. Me myself, I'm an HIV Black male and we've never had to go thru such unhuman behavior such as you all are going thru. Yes! We've had red bags to put all our clothings in in order to get them washed and signs on our cell door as well as a lot of other things. But thanks to a law suit that we have filed, things are looking up. That judge has no compassion and no knowledge at all to what we (the HIVs) have to go thru.

If an officer here discloses an inmate's condition to any visitors, this is unlawful and you can put his ass in court! I wish there was something I could do to help you peoples, but as you may know I'm fighting

OBITUARIES

Keith Haring

Keith Haring, a New York artist whose graffiti-style graphics became some of the most recognizable political statements about AIDS, died of the disease at his Manhattan home on February 16. He was 31 years old.

Born in 1958, in Kutztown, Pa., Haring came to New York to study painting at the School for Visual Arts in 1978. He soon discovered that subway graffiti was a more vital art form than what he found in the galleries. Haring quickly joined the street artists, generally using white chalk on the black paper covering unused advertising space. In spite of several arrests for criminal mischief, Haring became an extremely popular — although to many, unknown — artist who reflected the sights and sounds of street life.

Within several years Haring's fame grew and he garnered 42 one-person shows, as well as an international reputation. His work was exhibited in the 1983 Sao Paulo Bienal, the 1984 Venice Biennale, and is in permanent museum collections in New York, Paris, Amsterdam and San Francisco. Never forgetting his urban street roots, Haring also performed such public art as a 1985 mural of the Ten Commandments for the Musee d'Art Contemporain de Bordeaux of France and a 300-foot painting of interlocking red and black figures on the Berlin Wall. Haring also worked with oils and acrylics and some of his work was sold for as high as \$350,000.

While such prices made him a favorite with galleries and dealers, Haring was also



up in Seekonk and Providence, Rhode Island. He attended the University of Rhode Island but did not complete a degree in psychology.

At the University of Rhode Island (URI), 1970-1973, Tony became active in political movements including the antiwar movement, abortion rights, when it was illegal, and gay liberation. He was a member of Kingston Gay Liberation, the student group at URI.

After leaving URI, Tony became a typesetter as a state employee for the student newspaper. At this time, along with other URI students and friends in Providence, he became the publisher of a gay newspaper, *Morning Glory*, which had a circulation of about 3,000 and was distributed around New England. It was the first gay newspaper in Rhode Island. As a result of his activities with *Morning Glory*, which included articles on police brutality against gay people in Providence, Caporaletti and his family were harassed by the police with threatening phone calls. Two writers for the paper were arrested and threatened. He was also a member of the Rhode Island Gay Alliance.

Caporaletti also wrote for an underground newspaper, *The Point*, during this time period. Articles were primarily about acts of police brutality including one article on a raid of a local cruising area.

In 1973, Caporaletti moved to Boston where he worked at various typesetting jobs until he joined the staff of *Gay Community News*. He began as a fundraiser and also served, at various times, as a columnist for the paper's "Did You See?" column, classified ad manager, features writer and office manager. Caporaletti was a prominent figure in gay liberation organizations in both Providence and Boston. He was also one of the delegates from Rhode Island to the first New England Gay Conference.

Caporaletti moved to Los Angeles in 1979 with his lover at the time, George Dimsey. During most of that time, Tony was a typesetter for various publishing houses around the city. In 1983 he joined the staff of AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA) as a receptionist. During the next two years he was to serve as Administrative Assistant to the executive director and finally as Director of Office Services.

When his best friend came down with AIDS, Caporaletti left APLA to get away from the stress. He worked for a year at the Gay and Lesbian Community Services of Los Angeles as Administrative Assistant to the Deputy Director. He left the position to continue his studies of psychology at Cal State/L.A.. In Jan. 1988, he was diagnosed with ARC and had to withdraw from school. In Sept. 1988 he was diagnosed and hospitalized with pneumocystis pneumonia.

He published book reviews as a regular columnist for *Edge* Magazine and began to write a series of articles based on his experiences of being diagnosed and living with AIDS. Some of those articles were: "Keeping the Ghosts Away," about his hospitalization at County USC Medical Center; "Saqub," about sex and AIDS; and "AIDS Superman," about his first visit to 5P21 at LACUSC.

His body was cremated and distributed in the ocean by his family and friends. A private memorial service was held Dec. 12, 1989 in Providence, and a public memorial service was held at Los Angeles' Northern Lights Alternative House.

In lieu of flowers it is suggested that donations be made to Amnesty International, Save the Children, or the Necessities of Life Program at APLA.

GCN encourages anyone who would like to submit obituaries for publication to do so. We ask that obituaries be typed, double-spaced, and limited to 500 words, if possible. Include a photograph, if available. GCN offers writing assistance upon request. Contact the News department if you have any questions or would like to make a submission.

focus Counseling and Consultation, Inc.

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busy adorning T-shirts, toys and posters with his creations — which he sold at his own store, called the Pop-Shop — as well as advertisements for Absolut Vodka and Swatch watches. While such low-brow venues seemed appalling and self-promoting to some critics, they certainly contrasted with the expectations of the more formal art world and ensured that Haring's work was never cut off from a broad-based public audience.

Despite the commercialism, Haring's artistic sentiments remained on the streets and some of his best known and most loved works were the iconography that he produced for political causes. Besides anti-apartheid work, Haring was known for his AIDS-related work. The startling simplicity of his cartoonish graphics juxtaposed with immediately recognizable messages made his AIDS drawings a remarkable mixture of elucidation, empathy and education. Haring did many of these drawings, such as the IGNORANCE = FEAR sequel to the SILENCE = DEATH logo for ACT UP.

Although the New York art world has been hard struck by the AIDS epidemic in the past decade, few artists had the courage to be public about their sexuality or their health status. Haring was always open about his gayness and about being a person with AIDS. His involvement with ACT UP was in perfect keeping with his commitment to public and populace art, and also a reaffirmation of the grass-roots origin of his inspirations.

□Michael Bronski

Tony Caporaletti, Jr.

LOS ANGELES — Tony Caporaletti, Jr., of Silver Lake died Dec. 14, 1989 after a long illness at Miriam Hospital in Providence, R.I. He was a regular book reviewer and freelance feature writer for *Edge* magazine. He is survived by his mother, father, 10 brothers and sisters, paternal grandmother, two nieces and one nephew.

Tony was born Nov. 17, 1952 in Philadelphia, Pa., where he spent the first seven years of his life. His family later moved to Seekonk, Mass., the birthplace of his mother. He grew



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Armstrong

Continued from page 1

sexual or heterosexual. Protect the children! There's nothing in the Senator from Colorado's amendment that provides that protection. Ours does."

Kennedy's proposal won, 97-1. "The defeat of Armstrong's anti-gay amendment, which reinforced the lie that gay people are child molesters, is a signal that extremism on the Senate floor is no longer going to carry the day," said NGLTF's executive director, Urvashi Vaid, who was also active in the quick mobilization.

Armstrong's anti-gay attack was motivated by a recent agreement made between a gay legal group and the local Big Brothers chapter. A gay man, Jeff Gould, applied to Big Brothers here and was rejected because he is gay. Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund entered the case on Gould's behalf, charging that the policy violated the D.C. Human Rights Ordinance.

Gay and lesbian activists took up the cause and picketed a major Big Brothers fundraiser here Sept. 23. Less than a month later, on Oct. 19, the organization's board unanimously overturned the old policy. "We determined that it was no longer relevant and realistic for today's society," said Big Brothers director Desiree Griffin-Moore. The local chapter will now comply with national Big Brother and Big Sister policies that allow gay men and lesbians to serve unless a parent objects.

"It [was] yet another completely unjustified, reprehensible, offensive attempt by Armstrong to impose his narrow-minded view on the District of Columbia [that] opens yet another loophole in D.C.'s Human Rights Code," said Roger Doughty, president of the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington and organizer of the picket against Big Brothers. During that demonstration, Doughty said, "It's outrageous to perpetuate the worst stereotype about gay men as being unacceptable role models for young boys. We're here to tell influential donors this is a stain on Big Brothers reputation."

"The Senate has followed up on the advances we made on the Hate Crimes Bill," said HRCF's communications director, Gregory King. "There seems to be a growing awareness by the Senate that gay people are not going to sit by quietly and allow ourselves to be defamed by senators like Armstrong and Helms. This was a major victory in a short amount of time our community can be proud of," he said.

Statehood issues raised

Armstrong's homophobic attempt renewed calls for D.C. statehood to prevent Congressional interference in local affairs.

"Anytime members of Congress attack D.C. to reverse a code that has been law since 1973, they provide us with a perfect example of the need for statehood," said NGLTF's Radecic. Armstrong, she said, "has a real problem with the teeth enforcing D.C.'s Human Rights Ordinance. He does not want to see homosexual people having the same civil rights as other minority groups. He is set on eroding [the law] until there is barely enough power left to be one of the best ordinances in the country when it comes to protections based on sexual orientation." □

Phone sex

Continued from page 1

effort to avoid another defeat in the courts, Joel Dichter, an attorney for the information providers, said he hoped the new law would meet a similar fate. He and Wolfson pointed out that laws limiting speech are supposed to be written so as to have the least restrictive effect. Since Helms is out to "protect" people under 18 who might be "harmed" by hearing something "indecent," allowing their parents or guardians to block access from their phones should be adequate. The proposed law would block everyone's access automatically and would force those who want to use the lines to go out of their way to sign up.

While the lawsuits will attempt to prevent the federal law from taking effect, how the federal government plans to enforce the law once it does take effect remains unclear. Which lines will come under attack? According to Dichter, New York and California are by far the most successful states for the phone sex business. But while local phone sex businesses in those states

generate millions in revenues annually, there are also nation-wide lines.

For those communities in which phone sex is available, popular, and lucrative, the outcome of the battle against the Helms law may have a wide range of effects. AIDS educators and safe-sex advocates have argued that phone sex is an important option for communities affected by the epidemic, especially gay men. Lesbian and gay advocates argue that the gay lines are especially important to people in the closet, who might not feel they have any other way of communicating comfortably with other gay people.

Outweek published a poll in which several gay weeklies said one quarter to one half of their ad revenue came from phone sex ads. *Outweek* said 60 percent of its own revenue is derived from the ads.

□ filed from Boston

Repeal

Continued from page 3

because she felt its purpose was to tell people what to do and say. "I have the position that people shouldn't be silenced. I don't buy into this committee, I'm not going to be part of it. I just know I'm going to speak when I need to speak," said Bowen.

In particular, people raised concerns about not trusting the steering committee. During the meeting, the Coalition's LaFontaine said that he believed that it was the intention of some members of the steering committee to elect people to the open steering committee seats. This charge was sharply rejected by Gorton, Arline Isaacson of MGLPC and others.

Some participants felt that the charges of exclusion of groups were unfair to a degree. Ellen Zucker of NOW told *GCN*, "While it is always valid to ask that campaign for lesbian and gay civil rights be inclusive, I think it was precipitous to judge that the steering committee was not concerned with diversity, with making this organization inclusive. It is something which we will all put a lot of work into."

Others felt that the organizing was already well under way, and that the failure to contact some groups about the process was unfair. Sharmeen Islam of the Association of Mass. Asian Lesbians and Gay Men (AMALGAM) said that her group had not been contacted about the meeting. "I hope that there will be at least one person on the steering committee who represents a people of color organization," she said. "These are very different spheres, grassroots organizing and legislative lobbying. People of color and grassroots activists should be involved in this process," said Islam.

Vivian Carlo of Lesbianas Latinas (Lesla) said that as far as she knew, her group had not been contacted about the meeting either. "With something as serious as the gay rights bill, we need as many voices as possible. We can't let differences of race and class divide us," she said.

Jack Lo of AMALGAM said that he would not be involved in the campaign against the referendum. "I am just so burned out with working with the mainstream gay and lesbian community. I share this common goal with them — the bill — but the community at large is not very tolerant of the existence of people of color. They have to learn about minority groups and their needs."

The next meeting of the group to plan the referendum campaign will be held March 24 at 10 a.m. at the Gay and Lesbian Community Service Center, 338 Newbury St., Boston. □

Ed Boyce and Carrie Wofford also contributed to this story.

IMAGES OF WOMEN



International women's music

Sounds from around the world helped make 1989's women's music recordings among the best in recent memory

BY CAROLINE FOTY

The late '89 harvest of music by women was the richest in recent memory. Overwhelming, in fact. Every time I got a grip on writing this round-up, some new wonder dropped into the mailbox. It's a cause for celebration when even one recording like these is released, and last year we got a handful. Clip this article for your shopping list!

Altazor (Redwood)

If you like Latin/American New Song music and revel in the myriad colors of Latin percussion...if you can't resist the rhythmic energy — and were excited when you heard Sabia because the primary band members were women — then Altazor's debut album is for you. Altazor is a four-woman ensemble whose members draw upon diverse backgrounds (Chile, Cuba, Venezuela, U.S.) to create inspiring performances of music from Chile, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Argentina.

It is immediately obvious that each woman in Altazor is a superior performer in her own right. The rhythms percolate with the distinctive sounds and colors of wooden flute and a dozen percussion instruments, and the whole is underlain by intricate and insistent guitar and mandolin work. Lici Fuentes — who sings most of the lead vocals — has a beautiful and powerful voice, rich and dark in timbre. Jackeline Rago, the other primary singer, has the kind of sound you'd expect to hear calling out from a hillside across a valley — assertive, strong, and natural.

The group brings its talents to a collection of songs that focus on the struggles of people reaching out for freedom and peace, learning to do their own part as well as they can. The most beautiful are three songs taken from a cantata called "La vida vence a la muerte/Life defeats death" by Chilean artists Fernando Torres and Leonardo Cereceda. The cantata was written to honor Carmen Gloria Quintana and Rodrigo Rojas De Negri, two young people who were beaten and set on fire by Chile's President Pinochet's police during a national strike in 1986. Rojas De Negri, who had been living with his mother in the U.S. since 1973, died from his injuries. Quintana has recovered, and continues to work for freedom in Chile. With poetic lyrics and melting music, the songs protest the injustice of the government that perpetrated the attack, and encourage people to draw inspiration from Quintana's survival.

Los que sacan una lista son los mismos terroristas

Those who publish the ban are themselves the terrorists

Los que fueron ordenados contra un pueblo desarmado

Those who were ordered against a defenseless people

Los que apagan con la fuerza a los niños su

entereza

Those who extinguish with force the integrity of children

Los que viven en desvelo son sus propios carceleros.

Those who live in wakefulness are their own jailers.

("Los Carceleros/The Jailers")

Carmen se queda para el futuro

Carmen remains for the future

Con ella Rodrigo vive por siempre

With her Rodrigo lives forever

Carmen se queda ya es seguro

Carmen remains, that is certain

Con ella la vida vence a la muerte...

With her life defeats death...

Con ella la vida se hace mas vida...

With her life takes on greater life...

("La vida vence a la muerte")

Each song on the album evokes a spirit of hope and strength, whether speaking of return from exile, lamenting the death of a child, or sorting out life's conflicting demands. If there were justice in the world, Altazor would get a Grammy and become instantly famous. They combine cultural integrity, musical excellence, and passion for justice into a recording that is satisfying on many levels. This has to be declared the best album of the year; but (you knew there'd be a but!) it has to share that position with...

Libana — Sojourns (Shanachie)

I have loved the work of Libana for many years. In concert they are a multi-media experience blending dance, international instrumental virtuosity, a wealth of information about the music of many nations, and the ability to perform convincingly in at least a dozen languages. At a recent performance in the D.C. area they sang in Spanish, Quechua, Arabic, Berber, Hebrew, Ladino, Greek, Hawaiian, Bulgarian, and probably some I've forgotten. Their music is a must for every woman who hasn't got the time and resources to travel to all of these places herself in search of women's culture and oral tradition. After years of releasing their own recordings, it is a happy event to see Libana appear on a label well-respected in international folk and traditional music. The commitment that all of these accomplishments require should not be underestimated. It involves the transcription of music from recordings, many hours of coaching and practice in pronunciation of difficult sounds, and the endless around-the-world quest for new material and people who can help the group understand the material.

The end result is an inspiring mix of international music. Libana is skilled at varying its vocal styles to suit the music, especially in producing the unique sounds of Eastern European song. They have also learned to play instruments from many cultures; in particular, Marytha Paffrath has made herself a one-woman international percussion section; and Beth Cohen, Lisa Bosley,

and Linda Ugelow have studied in Hungary with members of the folk revival movement there.

Each song on *Sojourns* tells of the experiences of women, or is taken from music sung exclusively by women. These songs from around the world come with their own cultural contexts.

Songs from Yugoslavia and Bulgaria are sung by women working together. Much of the daily work in these countries has traditionally been sex-segregated, and often two women whose voices are well-matched become singing partners for life.

The Greek tunes selected for *Sojourns* are traditionally played and sung by the bride's friends and family during wedding processions. The haunting "O! Que Mueve Mezes" is a Sephardic song about the birth of a child and the child's welcome by the women assembled to help the mother. "Sovev galgal rechaim" is sung by Yemenite women grinding flour. From the Transylvania region of Romania comes a medley of tunes learned from the isolated Hungarian communities that have been eradicated by the Romanian government. And from the indigenous people of Bolivia come two songs taken from the traditional singing of Quechua women in the Andes. The impossibly high-pitched vocals combined with the deep boom of the bombo create a fascinating texture on these songs. "Ad Cethent Tulas," learned from an Algerian feminist group called Djurdjura, has an irresistible lilting melody, and offers a tantalizing glimpse of another nation's feminist music.

This may sound corny, but listening to this record can make you believe in an international family of women. It's also a great antidote to the American "culture" ladled out over us and the rest of the world. (Is anyone *really* happy about the idea that an unrequited desire for Lee 500 jeans might have brought down the Berlin Wall?) Besides making you feel very happy, this album creates a desire for more and brings up lots of questions: Can Libana find songs from the vital activism of Black South African women, or the lives and work of Native American women? Is there a women's tradition of song among the Gaelic speakers in western Ireland whose language was nearly killed by 19th century British imperialism? Is there any traditional women's culture in Scandinavia?

Libana's dedication to its mission continues to bring us inspiring music. *Sojourns* belongs in the collection of anyone interested in women, international culture, or world peace. Even in a year of excellent music this album stands out as something special.

Lucie Blue Tremblay — Tendresse (Olivia)

A lot of women have been waiting for this

one. Lucie Blue Tremblay has captured hearts all over the U.S. with her magical whistle and her rich, personal vocal expression. *Tendresse* offers many love songs and will probably please all those waiting fans.

Mixing together songs in French and English, Tremblay evokes both the similarities and differences of our Canadian neighbors. "After the march we tried to buy a paper in Washington, D.C./There were papers from Egypt, Lebanon, Moscow and Australie/But the news we wanted most of all Was news from Montreal (as you say, Montreal)/But there was no news at all." ("Tour Song")

Her gift for writing melody becomes much more apparent when her lyrics are in French. In the English songs the tunes are repetitive and almost conversational (and even occasionally dull, as in the sweet but musically boring "Daddy's Song"). When setting French lyrics, however, Tremblay's melodic range broadens and the music takes on a momentum that engages the listener. Especially satisfying musically are "Absence" and "Montreal."

Tremblay does not focus only on matters of the heart, however. "Politique" chronicles her meditations on a conversation among her band members that started when her producer-arranger-keyboard mastermind Daniel Loyer said, "Is there a place on the earth where I can live and be proud?" This question should strike the heart of anyone with a political conscience, and it makes for an unlikely but compelling song.

Y a-t-il une place dans l'univers

Is there a place in the universe

Ou l'argent n'achete pas la guerre?

Where money does not buy war?

Vouloir tout croire et ne rien voir

Wanting to believe everything and notice nothing...

On est comme des pions en silence,

We are like pawns in silence,

On travaille et puis on prend des vacances...

We work and then we go on vacation...

On the other hand, "Peaking" — which tackles teen suicide — put me off because it's the bounciest music on the album. The mood and the subject are so contrary that they cancel one another out, leaving nothing. And "Two Lives," which makes potent points about the killing compromises we make to survive in the public world, is dragged down by a dirge-like tune, the song's potential unfulfilled.

With the last song on *Tendresse*, "Seventh House," Tremblay achieves a synthesis of melody, the English language and her theme of love. The seventh house of an astrological chart is the part that affects relationships, and "Seventh House" is a gentle song that brings tears to the eyes.

The album also includes live tracks recorded in the acoustic beauty of Harvard University's Sanders Theater that are accompanied by keyboards, guitars, viola, and audience. This location is particularly flattering to Tremblay's simple and loving rendition of the folksong "The Water is Wide." The studio tracks are more fully orchestrated with synthesizers and other backup musicians.

Tremblay is playing and singing better than ever, and has the gift of making a personal connection with her listeners. If Olivia Records is more frequently "decamp[ing] from the women's music posse," as Joe Brown wrote in the *Washington Post* recently, then we should be grateful that someone as talented as Lucie Blue Tremblay is still willing to sing to us about our ambiguous position in the world.

Faith Nolan — Freedom to Love (Redwood)

This is Faith Nolan's third album — her first on a U.S. label — and like Lucie Blue Tremblay, she is from north of the border. But Nolan's Canada is the Canada of working class Black neighborhoods, Black and Native American foremothers, and ever-present racism. Feminism used to be about "making the connections" among society's oppressions — Nolan still makes these connections and does not let up. Her voice is strong, with a plaintive edge that drives home the angry lines and slips insinuatingly around the happier ones.

There's a lot of blues energy here, and not just in Gertrude "Ma" Rainey's delightful "Prove It On Me Blues" from the 1920s ("Went out last night with a crowd of my friends/they must have been women cause I don't like men/they say I do it/ain't nobody

Continued on page 11



Holly Robinson (l) and Katy Boyer in '21 Jump Street'

Jump for my love

It's not every day that a popular television program focuses on a teenage lesbian, but a recent '21 Jump Street' did just that. Not to mention the good music and great fashion statements.

BY SHELLEY MAINS

One of the nice things about my last job — working as a sex education teacher in public schools — was that it gave me an excuse to watch lots of TV shows and movies popular with kids. I've personally always loved to watch teen fare; never did I dream it would bolster my career. But in the classroom I found that episodes from television and the movies could be the perfect jumping-off point for discussions on many topics. The same kids who coolly refused to share their opinions on relationships, families, sexuality, or anything else in the abstract, eagerly jumped in with insights and values galore when it came to exploring the personal lives of TV characters. If I ever had trouble getting a concept across, a student might refer to a recent show to illustrate my point. And while I felt frustrated in pushing kids on their often frighteningly sexist and homophobic attitudes, I found that we could sometimes break these down by discussing the characters' motivations in a particular scene.

Given the rampant sexism, racism, homophobia, and violence portrayed in most gems of popular media, it is especially gratifying when shows with big teenage audiences turn out to be refreshingly inoffensive, even intelligent. That's why I'm hooked on "21 Jump Street." It's a TV show about a multi-racial bunch of hip, barely-out-of-adolescence cops. They're detectives who go undercover to tackle crimes involving youth. While the "teen issues" like drugs, gangs, and date rape get sensationalized on cop shows all the time, what's neat about "21 Jump Street" is that we get to identify with kids for a change. The "heroes" are the young detectives — who frequently experience personal and moral crises, a far cry from most law-and-order dudes on TV. And as the detectives are pulled into the lives of kids involved in various crises, the viewers are drawn along. The show generally presents sympathetic, complex teen characters, rather than superficial stereotypes of adolescent "criminals" and "victims," and gives context and motivations for their actions. Of course, "21 Jump Street" is also a hit with kids — and many of us post-teenagers — because the plots are engrossing, the characters appealing, and each episode is packed with good music and great fashion statements.

Given all of this, I was excited to hear through the lesbian grapevine (and then in *TV Guide*) that "21 Jump Street" was going to feature a "lesbian episode." While I'm always fearful of how crime shows present lesbians (often as venomous criminals or hysterical victims), I had some faith that this show could reasonably handle the topic. They'd done a good job on an episode about abortion clinic violence; this seemed a good barometer of the show's ability to in-

telligently present a controversial topic, without sacrificing entertainment for preachiness.

The much-awaited episode, entitled "Change of Heart" (with music by Paula Abdul) aired in mid-January (repeats are no doubt soon to follow). It opens with the murder of Evelyn Marks, a popular high school teacher. She had been an environmental activist who encouraged her students to take action; she had also been advisor to the high school newspaper. The group's captain, Adam Fuller (Steven Williams), and the show's only star female detective, Judy Hoffs (Holly Robinson), go undercover — he as a teacher, she as a student — to investigate. Hoffs becomes involved in the school newspaper. (Where did Judy suddenly develop top-knotch graphic layout skills? These detectives amaze me.) She meets and befriends the articulate and savvy student editor, Megan Bennett (Katy Boyer). Megan is quite broken up over her teacher's death, even to the point of obsession, and Hoffs begins to suspect she knows something about the murder. The plot thickens, and it becomes clear that Megan thinks she's gay.

As the episode unfolds, it's revealed that the teacher's murder took place outside a lesbian bar, and the question of "whodunnit" is interwoven with the story of Megan's sexual identity and the broader issue of homophobia. The show also focuses on our hero Judy Hoffs' reaction to Megan's sexuality (and her own), which I found impressive. If there's anything that currently straight — as well as gay and questioning — kids need to see in the media, it's explicit models of other "cool" straight kids who accept gay people and are open to questions about their own desires.

Hoffs emerges as such a role model in The Kiss Scene and its aftermath. At a memorial gathering for Marks at the principal's house, Megan gets a little drunk and spills liquor on her blouse. She and Hoffs run into the bathroom. There we see Megan's vulnerability for the first time. She sobs to Hoffs about how horrible she feels, and how scared she is (though we're left wondering about what). To comfort Megan, the detective puts an arm around her and asks what she's so frightened about. Then, still sobbing, Megan turns to Hoffs and tenderly strokes her friend's cheek before taking Hoffs' face into her hand and gently planting a kiss on her lips. As drama would have it, Megan then runs off, leaving Hoffs sitting stunned.

When Hoffs finally gets that shocked look out of her face and emerges from the bathroom (it takes all of a commercial break), she runs to Captain Fuller's house to tell him she now thinks Megan is gay. She explains that Megan kissed her, but lies, say-

Continued on page 11

The Handmaid's Tale

The film version of Margaret Atwood's novel comes to the screen with its dyke subplot intact, but ultimately feels like a missed opportunity

BY NATALIE DIFFLOTH

Set in the domain of a futurist fascist regime dominated by a Bible-thumping, terrorist-fighting right wing, *The Handmaid's Tale* quickly takes us in for a drama of fast-paced political suspense. The dynamic, star-studded cast of characters includes Natasha Richardson as Kate, protagonist and Handmaid; Elizabeth McGovern as Moira, very hot feisty dyke and queen of resistance; Faye Dunaway as Serena Joy, Wife and washed-up celebrity with Phyllis Schlafly-style hair; Robert Duvall as Fred, the Commander and Right Wing higher-up; and Aidan Quinn as Nick, chauffeur-by-day, opposition-leader-by-night.

Adapted from Margaret Atwood's best-selling novel, *The Handmaid's Tale* depicts the haunting atmosphere of a society where a deadly combination of events has transpired: a highly toxic environment has caused wide-spread sterility while a regime capitalizing on this promotes a system to isolate fertile women so they may reproduce for the elite. These fertile women are dubbed Handmaids.

The film opens on the scene of an attempted escape. Near the border of the Republic of Gilead, Kate, her husband and daughter climb through the snowy hills trying to cross into a freer land, but they are stopped by an armed border patrol. Kate's husband is killed and her daughter apparently abandoned, while Kate herself is "spared" and deported to a location for fertility testing and torture. Upon her positive test result — which saves her from the toxic waste dump prisons

did," they respond. "What is she?" "She's a whore.... She deserves the pain." Fertility is a gift to be valued at all costs. And as Serena Joy, the Wife in the family Kate is later placed with, puts it, "A baby would make my life whole. Don't you know that?"

This is just the beginning of Kate's adventures. The tale continues, following Kate at her placement with Serena Joy and the Commander, and in her allegiances with Ofglen (Blanche Baker), a Handmaid pledged to the resistance movement, and Nick, the Commander's chauffeur. The pace heightens when the Commander begins inviting Kate to his study late at night, offering her forbidden privileges such as playing Scrabble and reading *Vogue*. The ante is further raised when it becomes clear that the Commander is infertile, a fact for which Kate will be punished if she does not become pregnant. (They don't test the men.)

For critique's sake, it's important to comment on the ending here. Repeatedly throughout the film, we are shown ways in which the heterosexual, nuclear family is an institutionalized sickness, rape an enforced standard, and women a brutally demeaned class. Yet at the end of the film what we find is a romanticization of heterosexuality and heterosexual love, with, yup, you got it, a baby in the picture too. Kate is left barefoot and pregnant (literally) and waiting expectantly for her man to come back from the fight. This results in a very mixed message for the politics and content of the film. What were the filmmakers thinking anyway?



Elizabeth McGovern (l) and Natasha Richardson in 'The Handmaid's Tale'

labelled "the Colonies" — she is brought to a training center for Handmaids. Here she meets Moira, incriminated for "gender treachery." "I like girls," Moira says when she and Kate first exchange stories.

Although the two never quite make it to bed (oh, couldn't the filmmakers have given us just a little more beyond that fleeting touch?), it is Moira who teaches Kate the ropes and essentially makes her emotional survival possible. This is no mean feat in the context of the training center where the two are lodged. Presided over by the chilling despot Aunt Lydia (Victoria Tennant), the women are to be indoctrinated for the reproductive positions they will soon be filling in the homes of Wives and Commanders, the ruling elite who desire children.

At the center, the Handmaids-to-be are told of the olden days, before the revolution, when women were lazy, refused to have children, and thus blatantly denied service to God and their country. Those women, it is said, misunderstood. "In those days," Aunt Lydia says, "we had freedom from; now we have freedom to." Now women reproduce. Now they obey men and God. Now they are respected — have a place, a role, and are protected, apparently.

Or apparently not. If a woman is raped, the regime dictates, it is always the woman's fault. Women, after all, have self-control, men do not. In one scene at the training center, a woman who was gang-raped confesses to having had an abortion. Immediately the others descend on her. "Who led them on?" Aunt Lydia demands. "She

At first glance, the ending seems out of character with the rest of the film. But in considering it further, it does make sense. From the beginning scenes of the film, we are caught up in a suspense drama. We know who the good guys are and we know who the bad guys are. The good guys are trying to escape, and like in so many adventure films, we moviegoers are on the sidelines rooting for the good guys from the get go. This lets us bypass fully considering the scariness of what is being depicted because we know there is a resistance movement being built, an escape coming up. We don't have to really let the bleakness of the picture sink in.

Herein lies the biggest difference between the movie and Atwood's novel. Nowhere does the book offer an escape. The simple solution the film offers, on the other hand, is hypocritical. What *The Handmaid's Tale* ultimately idealizes is the same as what it condemns, with only the absence of explicit coercion in relationships. Children are still the prize value, and the woman is still hoping for her man to save her.

The film is disappointing primarily because it seems like an opportunity missed. It has all the makings of a scathing critique (much needed in these conservative times), but instead it undercuts its own message. As an adventure film, it is exciting and fun to watch, and Elizabeth McGovern sure is very hot. If it hadn't pulled its punches, *The Handmaid's Tale* could've sparked some fiery debate about the nuclear family and reproductive rights. Should you see it nonetheless? Yeah, why not. □

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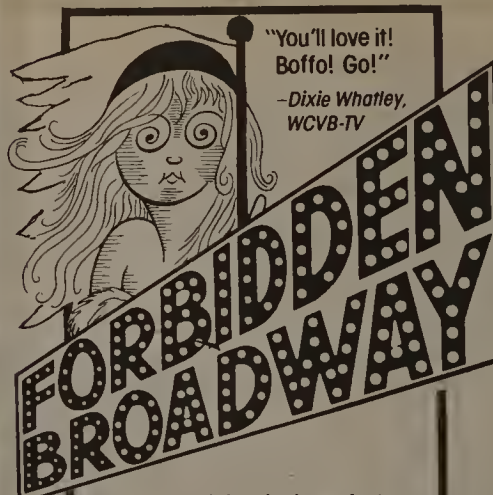
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Jump St.

Continued from centerspread

ing she turned her head away (the audience knows, however, she took that smackeroo full on the lips). For television, these scenes come off quite well: the bathroom scene is tender and the kiss seems tentative and natural — no chilling background music to indicate perversion. While the script subsequently gives Hoffs ample opportunity to state how shocked she was by Megan's advance — and to assert her heterosexuality in no uncertain terms — she never expresses repulsion, and clearly feels confused and even ashamed that she didn't actively avoid Megan's kiss.

Besides the personal drama, the episode exposes institutionalized homophobia, such as that doled out by various "helping" professionals. To better understand Megan, who seems to be hiding something about the murder, Hoffs goes to see Megan's guidance counselor, posing as a student concerned about her sexuality (though the scene is played so that we wonder if some of the concerns might be her own). The shrink is a horrible sleaze, your basic white-guy-in-a-suit who starts with the gratuitous rap so many of us have heard: "Lots of kids your age are confused," but soon goes off the deep end into quasi-Freudian mumbo-jumbo. He insists that Hoffs' own subconscious desired to kiss her friend, and that the kiss was based on her desire, not Megan's at all. He pruriently asks her "how the kiss felt," to which Hoffs responds, "I don't know, like a kiss, I guess." (This was probably my favorite line in the show. Hopefully it got through to gay, bi, and questioning teens, petrified about "what it feels like," as well as threatened straight kids who gag at the notion of same-sex touch.) The shrink, however, sums up by primly advising Hoffs never to give into such impulses again.

When I first saw this scene, I thought the counselor was simply vile. On a second view, I found him chilling in his believability. The world is full of "experts" shovelling self-blaming, "just say no" crap at teens (and adults) who have questions about their sexuality. I found myself worrying that an audience would buy this guy's line because it sounds so familiar: gay people are driven by perverse subconscious motives that we need to repress. Luckily, later in the show Hoffs puts down the counselor and his homophobic analysis in no uncertain terms.

By the end of the hour-long episode, Hoffs gets to the bottom of the case. It turns out Evelyn Marks was lovers with the incredibly closeted school principal, Ms. Rosen; Ms. Rosen's ex-husband found out about the women's relationship and murdered his ex-wife's lover outside the lesbian bar. Megan, it turns out, had followed Evelyn to the bar that night to talk about her own sexuality. To Evelyn's credit — and to the show's credit for pointing it out — the teacher maintained appropriate boundaries with her student, walking her across the street to a diner to discuss things. As Megan left the diner a while after Evelyn, she saw the murderer leaving the scene of the crime.

But solving the case wraps up only one strand of the program's plot; there's also the tale (hooray) of Megan's coming-out. Just as homophobia is implicated in Evelyn's murder, it also threatens to keep the case unresolved. At first Megan refuses to come forward as a witness because she doesn't want her sexual questioning made public. She panics that "Everyone will think I'm gay. I'm not; I'm confused. I don't know who I am but if I talk about this I can never find out. I'll be labelled a lesbian the rest of my life." Hoffs responds, "You'd let Evelyn's killer go free — just because you're afraid of what people might say about you?" Megan is prepared to do just that, but she urges Ms. Rosen, the principal, to testify instead. "You're the grownup, your whole life isn't at stake!" shouts Megan. But Rosen responds with the sad truth: "What I have is my entire life on the line. If people find out, I could lose my job — my son could be disgraced. I've been living a lie for so long I wouldn't even know how to stop." The implication left hanging in the air is that Megan can avoid years of internalized homophobia, isolation, lies, and fear if she refuses to step into the closet.

This makes sense to Megan. She testifies against the murderer, comes out to some friends. While she seems more at peace by the end of the show, the message is not that coming out as a teen is a picnic. Megan tells Judy Hoffs that her boyfriend dumped her (no shit) and "some people freaked...but some people came forward and were great." This may seem like the obvious to someone

who's been out for years, but it's tremendously important for a kid who thinks s/he may be gay or bisexual to realistically envision what it might mean to go public with that information.

The episode also makes it clear that external support is crucial for a gay teen. Megan recalls the importance of the adult encouragement she got from her teacher as she takes on the scary process of coming out: "Evelyn said no matter how horrible and confused I felt right now, one day all of this would make sense and I'd realize I'm okay and I'd feel okay about myself. That feels so far away. But what scares me most is that if I lied about myself now, maybe I'll never get there...maybe I'll never be okay." And just as Megan provides a role model for kids who might identify with her angst, Judy Hoffs again represents an equally important figure: the supportive peer. She says the words so many lesbians and gay men caught in the throes of coming out wish they'd hear from a friend: "What can I do to help you?"

This TV show wasn't perfect — there were some loopholes in the plot, some awkward monologues on how people "can't help it if they're gay" — but it was certainly better than anything else on mainstream TV about adolescent lesbianism. That's slim competition, and we'd all be better off not with the one perfect show, but with a lot of mainstream media efforts that present gay men and lesbians as realistic, complex, and likeable characters. Still, this is one TV show I'm glad had a captive audience of kids glued to the tube. I'm only sorry that my last job lost its funding, because I haven't been around the schools to hear their reactions. □

Shelley Mains is looking forward to the day when "Sesame Street" features an openly gay character (no, Bert and Ernie don't count).

Music

Continued from centerspread

caught me/they sure got to prove it on me"). Nolan's own songs are propelled by the same rhythmic swing and blues chord progressions, whether attacking injustice or celebrating love.

The title song angrily refuses to accept homophobia:

Walking in the park, swimming in the sea
Kiss you underwater so nobody can see
What I want is the freedom to love
Not allowed in places, and I can't love who I please
You tell me who I have to love and I call that slavery
What I want is the freedom to love.

"I Black Woman" declares Nolan's rejection of sexism within and outside the Black community:

Don't call me your mama, your sister, your girl
Don't call me anything in your fantasy world
I ain't a voodoo queen or an african dream
I'm my own woman, got my own damn scene
I Black woman will not be used.

A very welcome inclusion is "Strange Fruit," a song written and recorded by Billie Holiday that was blacklisted by radio station management. To my knowledge it has not been recorded since, and has not been included in Holiday anthologies. In the deceptively quiet style Holiday made famous, "Strange Fruit" describes the lynching of Black men in the U.S. south:

Southern tree bears a strange fruit
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root
Black body swinging in the southern breeze
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar tree...

On the lighter side, the album opens with Elizabeth Cotten's whimsical "Shake Sugaree," and includes "Jelly Roll," Nolan's tongue-in-cheek "Blues celebration of sensuality."

It's impossible to describe the energy and commitment of Nolan's singing and guitar playing, nor the skill with which she blends music and the call for social change. The album is as exhilarating in its artistry as in the concentration of its anger. □

Caroline Foty worries a lot less about women's music since these recordings started coming in the mail.

Note: In two weeks, Caroline Foty returns with more hits (and a couple of near-misses) in Part Two of the 1989 Women's Music round-up.

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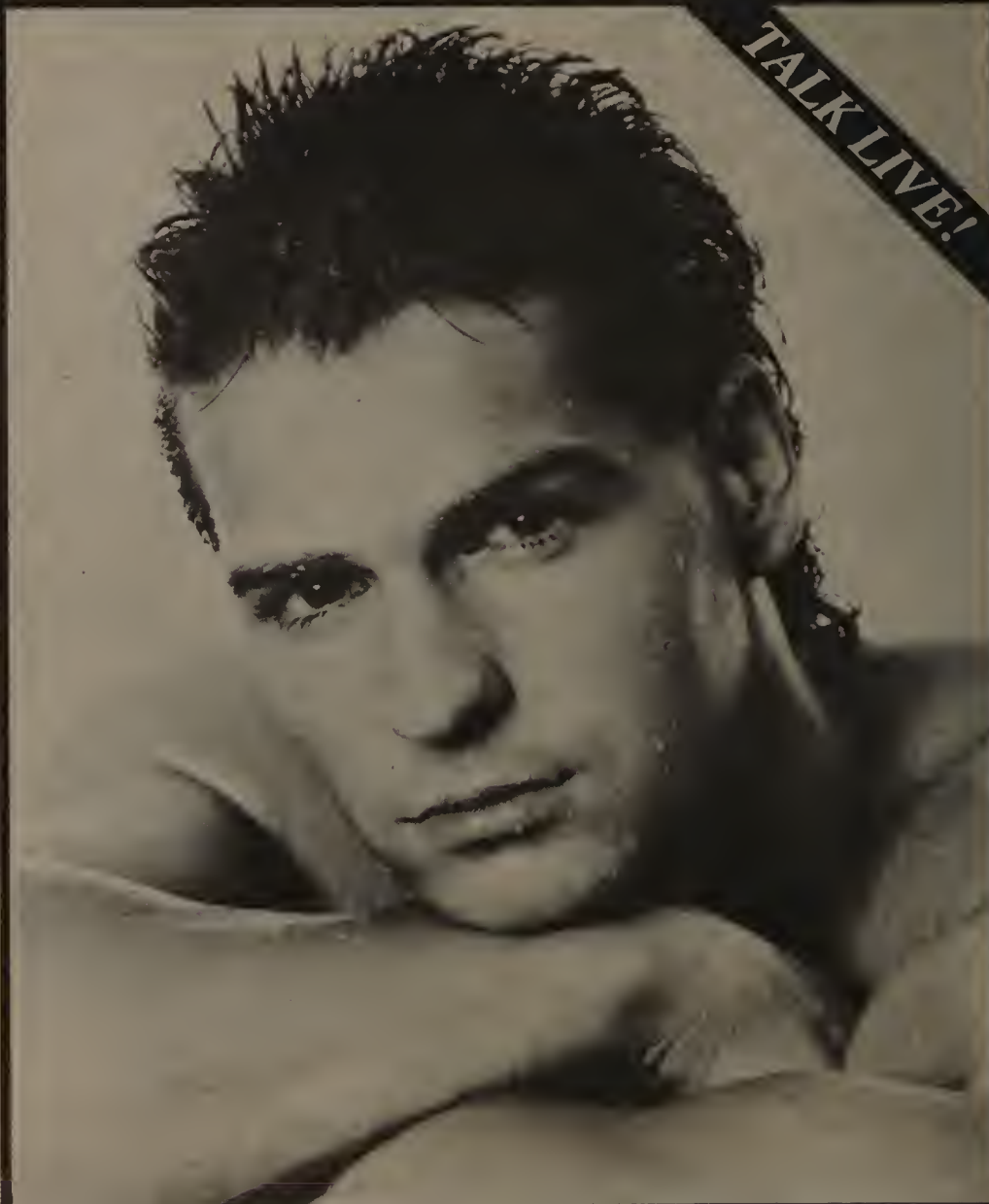
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GRT CAMBRIDGE LOCATION

LF three cats seek semi-neat nonsmoker to share living room, bathroom, large kitchen, 1-2 rooms available 3/1. Near T, buses, shopping. \$375 to \$400-plus 868-9219, messages. (34)

SOMERVILLE TEELE SQ.

LF 26-plus wanted for spacious sun-filled 5rm apt. Quiet, close to public trans. Please, no smoke, pets or drugs. Call 628-3216, leave message. \$250-plus. (34)

SOMERVILLE/CAMBRIDGE LINE

2 independent LF's seek 3rd to share 3BR. Porch, pantry, w/d, cat. 12 minute walk to Harvard Square. \$341-plus. 623-1588. (34)

3 GM looking for two more to share huge JP apt. Nr. Arboretum/Franklin Park. 2 mins. T stop. \$230.00/month plus utils. 524-8682. (35)

HOUSEMATE

Dorchester Carney Hospital area GWM seeking GM to share 3 bedroom house close to T. Fireplace, w/d, roof deck, parking, yard. No smokers. Call David 436-3404. (35)

2 ROOMS FOR THE PRICE OF ONE!!!

Teale Square, Somerville. 1 LF and 2 GM seek LF/GM for spacious apartment. Wood floors, porch, two cats, ten minute walk to Davis T. Smokers, students, omnivores O.K. \$325 plus utilities, 1st & last, 4/1/90. 666-0275. (35)

Newton, Upper Falls. LF looking to share two bedroom apt. Large bedroom available. Cat OK. \$350.00 heat and utilities included. Call 969-7939. (35)

Independent, friendly, political household in Cambridge seeks 4th woman 25-plus. Semi-veg. No pets, drugs, smoke. Avail. April 1st. Cheap rent. 497-7828. (35)

3 LF seek 4th Belmont 4BR, spacious hardwood floors, fireplace, off-street parking, bus-line. 25-plus friendly independent, no smoke, no drugs. \$280-plus. Sara or Sandy 484-8527. (35)

LF seeks gay man or woman to share 2 bedroom Coolidge Corner apt. Parking available; close to MBTA. \$425/month includes heat. Call Mary 739-3910. (35)

2 LFs seek 3rd for T-access. Allston 1st fl. apt. Lg. Bedroom, friendly, fun, storage, \$333-plus, 254-2025. April 1. (34)

ROOMMATE WANTED — APRIL THRU AUG

Lefty, irreverant, S.F. Grad student, 28, seeks neat, quiet, non-smoker to share 5-rm apt. in Davis Sq. Lrg B-room with bay — \$340-plus. Call Melani 623-6377. (34)

3LF seek fourth, 23-plus in a large, sunny, semi coop home with porch in Dorchester W/D, cat, on street parking included. 200-plus. Call 265-8818. Available March 15th. (34)

Lesbian Roommate wanted for friendly, tidy, small, cute, inexpensive (275 inc ht & hw) household in Som. nr. Camb. Flexible, comfortable enviro. with one other lesbian and cat. Great for modest income artist, activist, student, or young person. 628-0614. (34)

5 DYKES IN JP

Collective lesbian household seeks LF over 25 to share irreverance fashion intervention and apple pancakes. Feminists vegetarians activists. Spacious home near green and orange Ts, pond and great ice cream. Rent a mere 241.67-plus. All this and more. Call Today: 524-0821. (34)

JAMAICA PLAIN SUBLET/RENTER

3 LF's seek 1 or 2 LF's 30 plus to share spacious, independent, friendly, progressive home, pondside. Minimal drug and alcohol use. No smoking and no pets. Rent X 4 \$355/mo plus utilities. Available March 1. Call 522-9760. (34)

LF 42 seeks LF 30-plus for beautiful J.P. apt. Trees, porches, warm, friendly, politl, spiritual, fun, non-smok, cats, near Arboretum, T. \$316-plus, March or later. Tusi, 524-1812. (34)

LF non-smoker renting single furnished bedroom, parlor, shared kitchen, bath, laundry, \$325 includes all. Pets in home. No drugs. Security. (508) 997-3135. New Bedford. (34)

JP CONDO SUBLET

LF household seeks professional LF or perfect situation for lovers. 4/15 to 8/31 with option to rent beginning 9/1. Furnished, 2 flrs, huge BR with skylight, non-smoker, near T, Washer/dryer, no more pets, we have cat. \$292 each if couple, \$560 if single, heat/h.w. incl. 524-3417 anytime. (35)

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Progressive coop home near Central Square in Cambridge seeks funky and irreverant housemate. Semi-veg. No cigs or cats. Flex move in date. \$375 includes all. 864-1466. (35)

HOUSING WANTED PUBLICATIONS

NY SUBLET

I'm looking for a summer sublet or housesit in Manhattan or Brooklyn. Would prefer studio apt or other solo situation but very flexible. Call Elizabeth (617) 524-1390. (37)

APARTMENTS

GOOD NEIGHBORHOOD

Chelsea, Large studio, separate kitchen, large bath, on bus line (111). Avail Mar 15th. \$450/mo, includes heat & electric. Call Sue 884-4853. (34)

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A place to stay in historic Santa Fe charming adobe guesthouse hideaway equipped cozy fireplace. Weekend, weekly, monthly rates. (505) 982-6815. (39)

PUBLICATIONS

GAY-N-BI PERSONALS PUBLICATION

New issue comes out July. For more info write Classified Personals, Box 1299, Lewiston, NY 14092. Nationwide personals. (34)

HATE! \$5.00. D— Letter \$5.00. Both VINI. MY! Ishud one \$3.00. Mell V. Green, PO Box 422 Boston, Mass 02199. Barter, Stamps, Cash. Refund if unhappy. (34)

BREAKTHROUGH!

Political journal of Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, Spring 1989 issue. Women of the Philippine Revolution — Interview with Makibaka; The Post-Feminist Mystique; speech by PISD (People with Immune System Disorders); Crack and Black Youth. \$3 including postage. John Brown Book Club, POB 1422, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Do you need facts about menopause? Does the stereotyping of older women make you angry? Do you want to be part of an Older Feminists Network? *Broomstick*, a bimonthly national magazine by, for and about women over forty. Annual subs (US funds only) U.S. \$15, Canada \$20, Overseas and Institutions \$25. Sliding scale available. Sample copy \$3.50. 3543 18 St. #3, San Francisco, CA 94110.

BAD ATTITUDE

A lesbian sex magazine. Irreverent and Hot! \$12 for one year's subscription (3 issues). B.A. Inc., P.O. Box 110, Cambridge, MA 02139. (16.33)

LESBIAN CONTRADICTION

A Journal of Irreverent Feminism. Quarterly of commentary, analysis, reviews, cartoons & humor by and for women who agree to disagree—who are still political, but not necessarily correct. Sample \$1.50; sub. \$6; more if/less if. LesCon, 584 Castro, No. 236G, SF, CA 94114. (ex)

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OFF OUR BACKS

Lively, down-to-earth feminism in the nation's oldest women's newsjournal. Analysis, reviews, conference coverage, and news — on health, feminist theory, reproductive rights, civil rights and political work among working, disabled, incarcerated, old, and poor women, women of color, lesbians and women from every continent, \$15/11 issues. \$6 plus \$1 postage. 2423 18th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009 (ex)

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WOMEN'S REVIEW OF BOOKS

monthly review of current feminist writing. Since 1983. Our readers span the U.S., Canada, and abroad. Subscriptions: \$15/U.S., \$18/Canada, \$25/institutions. Free sample on request. THE WOMEN'S REVIEW, Wellesley Women's Research Center, Wellesley, MA 02181. (ex)

BLACK/OUT

Special 10th Anniv. edition of *Black/Out* now available. This bi-annual magazine from the National Coalition for Black Lesbians and Gays contains essays, reviews, poetry, news and announcements concerning the Black Lesbian and Gay community. Sample copy \$6 plus \$1 postage. 1 year subscription (2 issues) \$10 to BLACK/OUT, c/o NCBLG, 19641 West Seven Mile, Detroit, MI 48219. (ex)

ON OUR BACKS

The sexual entertainment magazine for lesbians, is 49 pages of erotic fiction, features, plus timely sexual advice and news columns. We are quarterly, national, unique and provocative. \$28/year sub/\$6 single issue. ON OUR BACKS, 526 Castro, San Francisco, CA 94114

ORGANIZATIONS

OLDER LESBIAN ENERGY

Social and support group for women over 40. P.O. Box 1214, East Arlington, MA 02174. (15.48)

BLACK AND WHITE MEN TOGETHER

Multiracial group for all people. Call (415) 431-1976 or write BWMT, suite 140, 584 Castro St. SF, CA, 94114. (16.1)

BOSTON ALLIANCE OF GAY AND LESBIAN YOUTH

Social support group for youth 22 and under. Wed. night general meeting from 7:30-9pm. New persons meeting at 6:00. Women's meeting at 6:45. Call 523-7363 for info. (15.32)

MAN/BOY LOVE

Intergenerational Love Support Group. World wide news, art, opinions. Application, information free. Bulletin \$1.00 NAMBLA, P.O. Box 174, New York, NY 10018 (7)

Prisoners Seeking Friends

IF YOU WANT PEACE, WORK FOR JUSTICE



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Anthology on Gays & Lesbians in Prison Writings and visual art by and about gays and lesbians who have been or are currently in prison, their family and friends, and the legal community. **DEADLINE: 7/31/90.** Please submit work to: **PRISON ANTHOLOGY**, Goddard College, Plainfield VT 05667.

I am a transsexual inmate and I would like for other transsexuals, transvestites, gays or lesbians to write to me. I want to hook up with a friend. I am fully a drag queen and plan to continue my 'path' when I'm out. Daniel MEDBERRY, 598329 (20/0177), PO Box 221, Raiford FL 32083.

GM, 6'4", 210 lbs, in prison, nice build, intelligent, caring, attractive, but no family or other outside contacts, and would like to hear from all gay men who know how lonely life can be. Will answer all who send a stamp. Gene WEIRICH, 14668, Box 1989, Ely NV 89301.

I am a 27 yr old gay man who hopes to hear from someone for a friend. Thank you, John PACK, 193792, Box 56, Lebanon OH 45036.

Entrepreneurially minded federal prisoner, author of numerous books and articles on business, seeks contact with like-minded individuals. Parole by August 1991, maybe sooner. Adam STARCHILD, 04690-067-J, Box 888, Ashland KY 41101.

I am in dire need of some penpals of my sexual preference. I'm 26, bisexual, handsome and would like to write gay guys and gals of all ages. Anthony HART, 328246, Rt 2 Box 4400, Gatesville TX 76563.

CENSORSHIP!

The prison has told me it would no longer let me get "The Militant". I need some help fighting this censorship of my reading material. Please write about this or for gay friendship. David COATES, 556, 2500 Westgate, Pendleton OR 97801.

GM, 22, looking for someone to talk to or write. So drop me a couple of lines and let's get to know each other. Mel HEMPHILL, D-98156, SHU C7D214, Box 7500, Crescent City CA 95532.

Hot and horny, well built, well hung, Louisiana hunk. Discharging this year. Will relocate for the right person. Boyd HIGGINBOTHAM, 87442 Beaver, PO Box 174, St Gabriel LA 70776.

I got your name from NAMBLA and am in need of some legal help and friendship. There are some serious errors in my case and also I would like to be able to talk with someone with the same penchant as mine. Donald LIGHTFOOT, 333700, Rt 1 Box 150, Tennessee Colony TX 75861.

I am a gay inmate and would like to be penpals with a Gay. I enjoy cooking, reading, writing, and music. LeRoy GRIPPEN, 71088, CBB L-L-15, LA State Prison, Angola LA 70712.

I am a very dominant man who know how to make real love with another man. I truly believe there's a whole lot more to life than sex. I'm seeking to find that Special Queen I can call my very own. Playing the field is for kids, and I am a Dominant Man! Please feel free to drop me a line. Louis WORKES, 149687, Box 900, Jefferson City MO 65102.

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I'm a 34 yr old lesbian. I like poetry and good conversation with sincere and intelligent people. I would like to write to someone that has a sense of understanding and humor as well. Thank you. Laverne JACKSON, C160130, H-4 (83), PO Box 8540, Pembroke Pines FL 33024.

I'm a 23 yr old fem looking for someone to share my feelings with. I'm out of touch with the free world and a true friendship. Keep up the good work! Katrina MINTER, 905377, Box 535, Jessup MD 20794.

I'm 38, black, serious minded and caring. Would love to have a nice friendship with some woman out there. Marylin THORNTON, 19580 NC, 1479 Collins Ave, Marysville OH 43040



My sincere appreciation to your caring staff for giving us so much usable information, and advocating for us like we were people and not just some back-and-forth germ. I would like to exchange correspondence with someone of you. I'm an avid, sweet person with many interests. Guarantee to answer. William BUSH, 205068, Box 511, Columbus OH 43216.

I'm a gay man trying to find a friend. I'm not the type to burn any one. I just need someone to have a conversation with. Jacque FERGUSON, E-17686 D/L 311, PO Box 500, Chino CA 91708.

Black bisexual male, 19, seeking to write some openminded person. Race unimportant. I can't write to other prisoners, but will answer all others. I'm from Baltimore. James HARPER, 052074, Mail 324-C-138, PO Box 120099, Clermont FL 34712.

Once upon a time "I could bring home the bacon and fry it up in a pan and never, never let you forget you are a man" but not any more. GM, 24, seeking correspondence. Jon CARSTENS, 14169-057, Box 888, Ashland KY 41101.

I'm 26, gay, and would appreciate it if you would put this in your penpal section. I'm sort of lonely and looking to write others. Richard JOHNSON, PO Box 100 — N-13340, Vienna IL 62995.

Very open minded, bi, Spanish-Italian male, seeks correspondence from open minded men and women. Gilbert MARTINEZ, 19465, Unita 2-503, Box 250, Draper UT 84020.

I'm from the Virgin Islands, 34, Black and I need a friend. Can you please put my name in your penpal section? Denroy VIGO, 88T 2587, Box 149, Attica NY 14011.

Dominant GBM, Top, Age 28, seeking someone to write who is willing to reach out and share themselves, as I am willing to do the same. TV&TS welcome. Especially from the state of Ohio. Rodney CONLEY, 183-452, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699.

GM, 30, looking for sincere relationship. I'm a straight homosexual! No head games. Please! Hurlis LUDLUM, Rt 1 Box 36, Jackson NC 27845.

I would like to correspond with TVs, TSs and gays, inside and out. My hobbies are reading, writing, photography, gospel music and soul-pop. Also dancing and body-building. I'm also bisexual. Arthur SWINDLE, 87A 2248, Box 51, Comstock NY 12821.

In search of [gay] correspondence

I hope that you will assist if you can in seeking some type of gay companionship. If you can, please reply to the following address and I will send all needed information. Respectfully, Lonnie SLAUGHTER, 376673 Wynne, Huntsville TX 77349.

I am a gay male, 24, with long black natural curly hair, brown bedroom eyes, light skinned and very good looking. I would love to have a true game free relationship shared with me. Ricky LEGGS, 854640, Box 30 (16-2D), Pendleton IN 46064.

19, GM, into music, light drugs, reading, poetry, cars, dogs, hunting, photography, motorcycles, and NAMBLA. Would like to hear from someone. Charles Skip JONES, AY-6853, Drawr R, Huntingdon PA 16652

I am a very sensual individual who would like someone who is the same to correspond with and share our views of the world and people around us. I do not wish to 'burn' anyone. I can write to other prisoners too as long as they aren't in Florida. David JOHNSON, C-073738, Box 667-A-035, Bushnell FL 33513.

Calendar



18 Sunday ☐ **HEART STRINGS: The National Tour.** Narrated by Christopher Reeve (pictured) and featuring the national touring cast, Kelsey Grammer, and over 200 of Boston's finest talents — including the Boston Gay Men's Chorus. At the Opera House, 8:30pm. \$25-\$175. For info: 437-6200, ext. 347.

Calendar listings must be received by the Monday before the week of the event. Photos encouraged. Please specify if event is/is not wheelchair accessible and/or sign language interpreted. Please use our format as a guide for listings and put each event on a separate sheet, if possible. Listings must be typed. No phone calls, puh-leeze!

10 Saturday

Newton ☐ Mothers and Others, A Feminist Cabaret with Debra Wise featuring comedy and docudrama, at The Newton Arts Center's Theatre, 61 Washington Park, 8pm, \$10, \$8 & \$5. For info 964-3424.

Dorchester ☐ Annual Dorchester International Women's Day Celebration. Featuring workshops, speakers, skits, music, art, food and more, at The Grover Cleveland School, 11 Charles St. 9:30am-4pm. For info 739-9751.

Boston ☐ Girth and Mirth of New England. A club for big men and their admirers. Monthly social at The Gay and Lesbian Center, 338 Newbury St., 8-10pm. Members \$4, non-members \$6.00. For info 846-8442 or 387-0762.

11 Sunday

Jamaica Plain ☐ Lesbian and Gay Neighbors of JP. Potluck at the First Church. 4:30-7pm. Mike 327-5669.

Boston ☐ Boston Healing Circle at the Metropolitan Health Club, 209 Columbus Ave. 7:30-9:30pm. Martin 738-0091, or Rafael 731-9584.

Boston ☐ International Women's Day Video Festival, 4-9pm on cable channel 3 in Boston, Brookline, Chelsea and Malden; 1-6pm on cable channel 19 in Cambridge and cable channel 3 in Somerville. Check with local community access cable center for details.

Cambridge ☐ New Words Bookstore. Reading by Catharine MacKinnon of her book "Toward a Feminist Theory of the State," 186 Hampshire St., 3pm. For info 876-5310.

13 Tuesday

Medford ☐ WMFO 91.5 FM Tufts University Radio Twice Blessed: A conversation with Jewish Lesbians, 7-9am.

Boston ☐ AIDS Action Committee. Volunteer open house, 131 Clarendon St., 7-9pm. For info 437-6200.

Roxbury ☐ First Church/Unitarian Universalist, Healing service for those affected by AIDS, John Eliot Sq., 7:30pm. For info 628-7665.

14 Wednesday

Boston ☐ FCHC's Living Well Series presents Exploring Women's Healing Power of Massage. 338 Newbury Street. 6-8pm. Paul or Judy at 267-0900 to register.

Boston ☐ PWA Coalition of Boston meets at the Boston Living Center, 140 Clarendon Street. 7:30pm. 437-6200 ext. 293.

Boston ☐ Downtown Lesbians Brown Bag Lunch, 12:30pm. For more info Julie 725-3562.

15 Thursday

Boston ☐ GCN Production Night. All welcome. Proofreading starts at 5pm. Paste-up after 7pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info, GCN: 617/426-4469.

Boston ☐ The Group. Social/discussion group talks about "Kiss of the Spiderwoman", 338 Newbury St, 8pm. For info 266-1129.

16 Friday

Boston ☐ GCN Mailing. Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5-10pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 617/426-4469.

Cambridge ☐ Black Rose Lectures, "Facing the Realities of the Prison System", MIT Building 9 rm 150, 105 Massachusetts Ave, 8pm. For info 437-9309 or 524-0781.

17 Saturday

Boston ☐ Boston Gay Men's Chorus, at Symphony Hall, 8pm \$30, \$25, \$18, \$14 & \$9. For more info or to charge tickets 247-2462.

Boston ☐ Country Western Dance, For HIV + community and friends, at Boston Living Center YMCA, 140 Clarendon St, 8pm-1am. For info 437-6200 x328.

Boston ☐ Breaking the Barriers to Liberation, Poetry, art, music, and dance of the women of Boston's many communities, at The Church of All Nations, 333 Tremont St., 7:30pm, \$5 donation. For info 522-8728.

Nashua ☐ Women in Touch, St. Patrick's Day dinner, at Crosswind Restaurant, 7pm, \$7.50. For info 603/883-9228.

Jamaica Plain ☐ Miriam, Blues singer/songwriter, at The Crone's Harvest, 761 Centre St., 7:30pm, \$5. For info 983-9529.

Boston ☐ GALA, Art auction to benefit people with AIDS, at The Club Cafe, 2-5pm, \$5. Free food and open bar. For more info or to donate art 524-4048.

Boston ☐ Heart Strings, The National Tour of this Broadway-style two act musical, at The Opera House, 539 Washington St., 8pm, \$25, \$75, \$175. For more info 437-6200.

20 Tuesday

Framingham ☐ N.O.W., "Making it in Massachusetts: Women's Strategies for Survival", at The Framingham Unitarian Church, 7:30pm. For info 508/877-5456 or 508/653-8560.

22 Thursday

Boston ☐ GCN Production Night. All welcome. Proofreading starts at 5pm. Paste-up after 7pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info, GCN: 617/426-4469.

Boston ☐ AIDS Action Committee, "Survival 101" a workshop on how to find free clothing and food, 131 Clarendon St., 6pm. For info 437-6200 x328.

Cambridge ☐ Libana in concert. A celebration of women's world music, at Wheelock Auditorium, 200 The Riverway, 7:30pm. For info 536-7464.

23 Friday

Boston ☐ GCN Mailing. Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5-10pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 617/426-4469.

24 Saturday

Cambridge, ☐ Amethyst Women Square Dance. Live music, 7 Temple St., 8-11pm, donation. For info 254-8312.

Boston ☐ AIDS Action Committee, workshop: "Sex, Dating and Intimacy in the Age of AIDS", at The Arlington St. Church, 351 Boylston St., 10am-6pm. For info 437-6200 x298.

Weekly events

Saturday

Boston ☐ Gay Boston, with Jim Voltz. Boston Neighborhood Network, channels A3 and A8. 7:30-8pm.

Boston ☐ Body Electric: healing with group sensual massage for gay and bisexual men. 551 Tremont. 7:30pm. \$12. 522-9164.

Sunday

Boston ☐ Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY). Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. 2-5pm. 523-7363 or 1-800-42BAGLY.

Boston ☐ Metro Healing healing group for everyone. Metropolitan Health Club aerobics room, 209 Columbus Ave. 7:30-9:30pm. 426-9205.

Boston ☐ The Gay Dating Show, WUNR 1600 AM. 10:30pm-2:30am. Lesbians and Gay Men.

Boston ☐ ALATEEN Group open to lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth, 22 and under. 338 Newbury Street, rm. 202k. 6pm-7:30pm. Dave, 629-2518 or Frank, 666-8912.

Boston ☐ Metropolitan Community Church meets for worship and fellowship at 131 Cambridge Street. 7pm. 437-0420.

Monday

Cambridge ☐ Healing Circle group healing. 5 Upland Rd. 7:30-9:30pm. \$5 suggested. 864-1989.

Cambridge ☐ Lesbian Rap. 3/12 Staying Friends with Hets, 3/19 Classism. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-10pm. Free. 354-8807 (TTY/voice).

Boston ☐ Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights holds bi-weekly planning meeting. Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. pm. 776-6956.

Tuesday

Boston ☐ Gay Fathers of Greater Boston meet 1st and 3rd Tues. of the month. Lindemann Ctr., 2nd fl. 8-10pm. 742-7897.

Boston ☐ Gay and Lesbian Support Group for Adult Children of Alcoholics. Faulkner Hospital. 8:30-10pm. Intake interview required. 522-5800 x1908.

Boston ☐ Lesbian and Gay Freedom Trail Band. No audition necessary. YWCA, 120 Clarendon St. 7:15pm. Kathy, 424-7025 or Gary, 267-6186.

Providence, RI ☐ ACT UP/Rhode Island open meetings. Rocket, 73 Richmond St. 7pm. 273-7228.

Boston ☐ ACT UP/Boston meets to confront the AIDS crisis. Gay and Lesbian Service Center, 338 Newbury Street, Rm. 203. 7pm. 49-ACT UP.

Cambridge ☐ Bisexual Women's Rap. 3/13 Defining Bisexuality, 3/20 Spring Equinox Party. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30-10pm. 354-8807.

Cambridge ☐ 30-plus Lesbian Rap 7-8:30pm. 3/13 Women's Health, 3/20 Coming out to family. The Women's Center (see above).

Cambridge ☐ Women For Sobriety, a self help group for women recovering from addictions. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-9:30pm. 354-8807

Arlington ☐ Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays meets on the second Tuesday of every month at First Parish Unitarian Church, 630 Mass. Ave. 7:15pm. Info: 547-2440 or 508/562-5807.

Wednesday

Boston ☐ Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth. Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. New persons' meeting 6pm; women and men meet separately 6:45-7:30; general meeting at 7:30pm. 523-7363 or 1-800-42BAGLY.

Boston ☐ Bisexual Children of Alcoholics. Mass. General Hosp., lower amphitheater 7:30pm. 259-1559.

Cambridge ☐ Say it, Sister! WMBR, 88.1 FM. 7-8pm.

Boston ☐ Women's Self-Defense Classes sponsored by Women's Self Defense Collective. Studio 3, 731 Harrison Ave., 2nd floor. 6-8pm. \$10-\$35 sliding scale per mo. 625-1115.

Cambridge ☐ Lesbian AI-Anon with childcare. Women's Center (see above). 6:30-8pm.

Thursday

Northampton ☐ Valley Gay Alliance meets 1st, 3rd Th. every month, basement of the Unitarian Church, 22 Main St. 7:30pm. 413/527-5310.

Stoneham ☐ Incest Survivors Group for women. New England Memorial Hospital, 5 Woodland Rd. 5-6:30pm. Sara Epstein, 979-7025.

Cambridge ☐ Wise Woman Tradition Herbal Medicine and Women's Wisdom Classes. Sliding scale. Whitewolf, 277-8232.

Boston ☐ Boston Area Rape Crisis Center drop-in group for women who have been raped. 492-RAPE.

Cambridge ☐ Incest Survivors Group. Women's Center (see above). 7:30-9:30pm.

Cambridge ☐ Non-offending male sexual abuse survivors group meets first Thursday of every month. Cambridge Ctr. of Commerce conference room, 859 Mass. Ave. 8:30-10pm. \$5 donation. 498-9881.

Friday

Worcester ☐ AIDS Project-Worcester support group for HIV positive, PWAs, PWARCs, supporters. Open to all lesbians, gay men. 51 Jackson St. 7-9pm. Dana 508/755-3773.

Boston ☐ Healing group for everyone. Santa Fe Hair Salon, 528 Tremont St. 7:30-9:30pm. 426-9205.

'No negatives involved, except the loss'

Failed candidacy of Black gay man heightens Southern gay visibility

By David Morris

NEW ORLEANS — Despite defeat at the polls, a Black gay city council candidate here can claim a victory in optimism and solidarity among the communities that supported him.

"We've got so many firsts and so many plusses that there are no negatives involved except the loss," Larry Bagneris told *GCN*.

Capturing 40 percent of the vote, Bagneris was defeated in the March 3 runoff election by realtor Jacquelyn Clarkson after placing a close second among 18 candidates in a February 3 primary. The winner will represent District C, an area split in half by the Mississippi River that includes the heavily gay French Quarter. Black people living on both sides of the river make up almost half the district's population, although no Black city councillor has ever represented the district. The mayor and four of the seven city councillors in New Orleans are Black.

Bagneris' defeat was in part attributed to tax measures that were also on the ballot. The measures were designed to offset declines in city revenue resulting from the oil slump and decreases in federal funds and drew to the polls conservative middle-class voters opposed to the legislation.

Had he won, Bagneris would have joined three other openly gay elected officials in the South and some 60 elected and appointed officials in the nation.

Even though Bagneris lost, his supporters praised the campaign. "The election night party for Larry's campaign was a victory party," campaign manager Robert Batson told *GCN*. "There was a great, great feeling of celebration.... What has happened is that we now have a seat at the political table of New Orleans and Larry is an important person in the political process of the city."

Born and raised in a housing project in District C, Bagneris has been active in lesbian and gay organizations in Houston,

where he lived for several years, as well as in New Orleans. He has served on the boards of several national organizations, including the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the Gay Rights National Lobby.

Campaign worker Joan Ladnier said the fact that Bagneris is gay was not an issue in the campaign. "It never really came up," she told *GCN*. "He never hid it and he actually tried to put it into the press so that it wouldn't be an issue, something they would try to attack him with," she said. "It is an issue that we're proud of the fact that such a qualified candidate has come along to do this in the gay community."

Ladnier said the Bagneris campaign focused on the diversity of the district by offering Black, Latino and gay communities a candidate who was willing to represent them.

An important accomplishment of the campaign was the range of endorsements gained, including community, gay, women's and labor organizations, the Orleans Parish Democratic Committee, the Alliance for Good Government, three city councillors, two state representatives, three state senators and a number of ministers.

Bagneris said campaign issues, which included the economy, crime and historic preservation, were as diverse as the constituency. "We're not a one-issue people," he said. "We're multi-issue. That's what the radical Right always tries to saddle us with, one issue. We're full human beings living full lives."

Bagneris supporters say they now fear for the city's historic areas because since Clarkson is a realtor, she will view them as targets for development. Clarkson is allied with retiring incumbent District C councillor Mike Early, who is widely suspected of corruption and is under grand jury investigation for suspected tax evasion involving real estate deals.

□ filed from Austin, Texas



Larry Bagneris

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